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# THE HISTORY

OF THE

# GREAT IRISH REBELLION

OF 1798.

FROM THE TEXT OF JOHN MITCHEL.

*WITH INTRODUCTORY AND CONCLUDING CHAPTERS BY*

JOHN FERGUSON.

O country, writhing in thy chain  
With fierce, wild efforts to be free,  
Not seeing that with every strain  
The bonds close firmer over thee;  
Or grasping blindly in thy hate  
The temple pillars of the state,  
To hurl them down on friend and foe,  
Crushed in one common overthrow—  
Can none of all thy poet band  
Preach nobler aims, loved Ireland?

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## INTRODUCTION.

MORE than half a century had passed since the Treaty of Limerick, during which time the Irish people lay in abject slavery. Never in the world's history has a people which displayed the martial spirit that distinguished the Irish at the Boyne, Aughrim, and Limerick, sunk without further struggle for nearly a century into such a helpless and degraded position as did the Irish under the Penal Laws. During some 60 years—two generations—the Irish people—i.e., 5 out of 6 of the inhabitants of the Island—had as little influence in the affairs of their country as the Southern slaves in the policy of the United States. And during all this period the Irish were worse treated than the Negroes by the Southern Planters. Tyrants have occasionally fattened, clothed, amused, and lulled into intellectual and moral death conquered peoples, but the conquerors of Ireland boldly and brutally set themselves to starve and exterminate as well as to degrade their victims. I quote Lecky, the Unionist Member for the University of Dublin. In his great and invaluable *History of Ireland*, vol. i., page 169, he says of the Penal Code—"It was intended to degrade and impoverish, to destroy in its victims the spring and buoyancy of enterprise, to dig a deep chasm between Catholics and Protest-

ants." These ends it fully attained. "It formed the social condition; it regulated the disposition of property; it exercised a most pernicious and enduring influence upon the character of the people. It may be possible to find in the statute books both of Protestant and Catholic countries laws corresponding to the most parts of the Irish Penal Code, and in some respects surpassing its most atrocious provisions, but it is not the less true that the code, taken as a whole, has a character entirely distinctive. It was directed against the many, not the few. It was not the persecution of a sect, but the degradation of a Nation. It was the instrument employed by a conquering race supported by a neighbouring power to crush to the dust a people amongst whom they were planted. And, indeed, when we remember the greater part of it was in force for nearly a century, that its victims formed, at least, three-fourths of the Nation, that its degrading and dividing influence extended to every field of social, political, professional, intellectual, and even domestic life, and that it was enacted without the provocation of any rebellion in defiance of a treaty which distinctly guaranteed the Irish Catholics from any further oppression on account of their religion, it may justly be regarded as one of the blackest pages in the history of persecution. In the words of Burke—"It was a complete system full of



coherence and consistency, well digested and well composed in all its parts. It was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the impoverishment, oppression, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." Dr. Johnson, the noblest representative of English Toryism, formed a similar judgment. He said—"There is no instance, even in the 'Ten Persecutions,' of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics."

It is strange, indeed, that no maddening vengeance roused a brave despair in the heart of such a fighting race. We are driven to account for it, by the departure of 16,000 of the chivalry of Ireland with Sarsfield, who should have remained at home to see the treaty kept, and the continuous stream of men to join the Irish Brigade in France, or to die "in far foreign fields from Dunkirk to Belgrade," fighting the battles of various foreign despots. O'Callaghan, in his *History of the Irish Brigade*, estimates that during the century that followed the Treaty of Limerick, 1691, 500,000 Irish soldiers died in foreign service.

The following quotations from Lecky's *History of Ireland*, vol. i., give a picture of the wretched condition to which English rule had reduced the once prosperous Irish people. Bishop Nicholson, "though a hard and selfish man," thus describes the country in 1720, "Never did I behold in Picardy, Westphalia, or Scotland, such dismal marks of hunger and want as appeared in the countenances of the poor creatures I met on the road, . . . the miserable hovels, the almost complete absence of clothing;" and he tells how one of his carriage horses being accidentally killed, it was at once surrounded by 50 or 60 famished cottagers struggling desperately to obtain a morsel of flesh. . . . "The poor," wrote Sheridan, in 1728, "are sunk to the lowest degree of misery and poverty—their houses, dunghills; their victuals, the blood of their cattle or the herbs of the field." Swift, in 1727, says, "It is manifest that whatever stranger took a journey through Ireland would be apt to think he was in Lapland, rather than a country so favoured by Nature as ours in fruitfulness of soil and temperature of climate. The miserable dress and diet and dwellings of the people, the general desolation of the country, the families of farmers who pay

great rents, living in filth, upon butter-milk and potatoes, without shoes or stockings to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hog-sty to receive them." In 1740 an authority Lecky quotes says, "Want and misery are in every face—the rich unable to relieve the poor, the roads spread with dead and dying bodies. Mankind the colour of the docks and nettles they fed upon." Skelton, a Protestant clergyman, declared, "Whole thousands in a barony have perished of hunger or disorders occasioned by unnatural or putrid diet." Yet this is the country of which Lecky tells us, "The land itself before these wars was populous, well inhabited, and rich in all the good blessings of God, being plenteous of corn, full of cattle, well-stored with fish and other good commodities." Such was the result of the rule of the stranger in unhappy Ireland. The religion of the people proscribed; priests hunted, hanged, or banished; education forbidden. Let me again quote Lecky's *Ireland*. "They were deprived of the elective suffrage, excluded from the corporations, from the magistracy, from the bar, from the bench, from the grand juries and the vestries. They could not be sheriffs or solicitors, or even gamekeepers or constables. They were forbidden to possess arms. They were excluded from the Army and Navy. They could not possess a horse of the value of more than £5, and any Protestant upon tendering that sum could appropriate the carriage horse, or hunter of his Catholic neighbour. In his own country the Catholic was only recognised by the law 'for repression and punishment.'" The Lord Chancellor Bowes and the Chief Justice Robinson, both distinctly laid down from the bench, "that the law does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Roman Catholic." The Catholic was not permitted to be the guardian of a child. It was made penal for him to keep a school or to send his children to be educated abroad. The alternative offered by the law to the Catholic was that of absolute and compulsory ignorance or of an education directly subversive of his faith. No Catholic was permitted to buy land, or inherit or receive it as a gift from a Protestant. Any marriage celebrated by a Catholic priest between a Protestant and a Catholic was null and void, and the priest who officiated was liable to be hanged.

Thus lay in worse than Egyptian bondage "the land of saints and scholars."



The conquest appeared to be at last complete. Every year in thousands the manhood that could not have tamely submitted to degradation had it remained, sought midst the armies of Europe that which could not be found at home—an honourable career.

“For exiled in those Penal Days,  
Our banner over Europe blazed.”

The population thus sank year by year into a more abject condition, and for nearly a century the history of Ireland was concerned only with the Planters, Palatines, Huguenots, and others of the foreign garrison, into whose merciless hands the *insula sanctorum et doctorum* had passed midst the whirlwind and roar of battle, and by means of broken treaties unsurpassed for perfidy in the history of the world. But “He who seeth the end from the beginning, and weaveth the ages, as it were, in His loom” was preparing “to make the wrath of man to praise Him.” The crafty policy of the wise was to be confounded. From the camp of the enemy the deliverers were to come forth, who would put a new heart into the people, and lead them towards, if not into, the Promised Land.

Some eighty years had passed since that brilliant soldier of the League of Augsburg, who led with such skill the armies of the great Catholic powers of Europe, had, to the delight of the Courts of Rome, Vienna, and Madrid, defeated the Irish and French at the Boyne. The conquered natives had been left by England during that period in the hands of a foreign garrison of persecutors and confiscators, as merciless as any in the world’s records. No effort at resistance save by individual despair had during this period disturbed or alarmed the conquerors. Whilst Scotland was in arms in 1715, and again in 1745, for the worthless House in whose cause Ireland had twice so foolishly risked and lost all, no sign of sympathy appeared amongst the Irish. More than once the necessities of England left the country denuded of troops. Again and again professions of loyalty by the Catholics were openly made, and the Protestants lost all fear or even the suspicion of any intention to disturb them in the possession of the country or its Government. Relieved of this, the natural virtues of humanity began to assert themselves. The winning nature of Irish character began to tell upon the children of the Cromwellian and Williamite settlers as it

had told centuries before upon the chivalrous Normans. This culminated in the middle of the 18th century, when there entered the arena of Irish political life a young man of eloquence, genius, and power, of whom all the world has heard, and who at once rose to a higher level of toleration and patriotism than ever did the most chivalrous Geraldine. Henry Grattan entered the Irish Parliament, avowing as a first principle that “the Irish Protestant could never be free till the Irish Catholic has ceased to be a slave.”

But in another direction a change was taking place in the minds of the Protestants. Set free from the fear of Catholic influence, they began to see how the crafty, selfish, and cruel policy of England was frustrating all their efforts to make their country, as they now began to regard it, prosperous. One by one, as they had developed successful trades, they were mercilessly suppressed in the interest of England. Lecky details, with force, the cold-blooded policy by which this great wrong was accomplished. I must confine myself to a general quotation—*History of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 189—“Her Parliament was wholly dependent upon that of England. . . . She lay within a few hours of the English coast. The bulk of her people were crushed to the very dust by Penal Laws, and most of the men of energy and ambition were driven from her shore. She was thus completely within the grasp of England, and that grasp was tightened till almost every element of her prosperity was destroyed.”

Under these conditions arose the demand of the Protestants for a Parliament free from English control in purely Irish matters. England’s difficulties abroad obliged her to permit the arming and training of the Irish Protestants to defend the country, and with the possession of arms came the assertion that “no power but the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland had a right to make laws for the people of Ireland.” And thus—like every right ever Ireland obtained—by force, actual or potential, came the Parliament of ’82.

“Hurrah! ’tis done, our freedom’s won,  
Hurrah for the Volunteers!  
No laws we own but those alone  
Of our Commons, King, and Peers.  
The chain is broke, the Saxon yoke  
From off our neck is taken;  
Ireland awoke, Dungannon spoke,  
With fear was England shaken.

. . . . .



Remember still, through good and ill,  
 How vain were prayers and tears—  
 How vain were words, till flashed the swords  
 Of the Irish Volunteers.  
 By arms we've got the rights we sought,  
 Through long and wretched years—  
 Hurrah! 'tis done, our freedom's won,  
 Hurrah for the Volunteers."

The first ten years of Grattan's Parliament were pregnant with good results. All the Penal Laws were relaxed, and many were repealed. A host of patriotic men sprang up with broad ideas of civil and religious liberty, whose object clearly was to bring the Catholics within the constitution. The Catholics felt the generous spirit of these patriots, and began to take an interest in public affairs, and to seek with modest language and real loyalty some small instalments of citizen rights. In 1778 a Catholic Relief Bill had been passed; it was extended in 1782, and the Catholics, after a century of slavery, at last began to know they had some legal rights. They were now by an Act entitled "for the further relief of His Majesty's subjects professing the Popish Religion" enabled to purchase and bequeath land. Catholic Bishops were permitted to exist in the country. Catholics were no longer prohibited from living in Limerick or Galway. A Protestant could no longer appropriate the horse of a Catholic by tendering him £5. Catholics were no longer to bear the loss sustained by Protestants from the privateers of foreign nations. They were allowed to become schoolmasters, provided they took a very offensive oath of allegiance. Catholic laymen were now permitted to be guardians to Catholic children. Grattan was far from satisfied with these concessions. He urged "The question is now—Shall we be a Protestant settlement or an Irish nation? So long as we exclude the Catholics from natural liberty and the common rights of men we are not a people. I should be ashamed of giving freedom to 600,000 of my countrymen when I could extend it to 2,000,000 more." This same year the last serious grievance of the Protestant dissenters was also removed. Almost immediately after the victory of William over the Irish, the Presbyterians, the men of William's own faith, were placed outside the constitution by the "Sacramental Tests" Act. Thus, the men who defended 'Derry, and who held Ulster for England, were penalised in return for their services. They were considered unfit to act as members of Corporations or as Magistrates; their marriages were illegal, and in many respects they were

outside the privileges of the law, but they had largely taken part in the volunteer movement, having, unlike the Catholics, the right to have and learn the use of arms, and so the Irish Parliament now admitted them to privileges not granted to their co-religionists in England for nearly half a century later.

The history of Ireland from 1782 to 1801 is, indeed, "the one brilliant moment plucked from liberty's tomb." Our Unionist historian, Lecky, does justice to the National Parliament. Prosperity in agriculture, manufactures, and foreign trade was so remarkable as to draw surprising admissions from even those who were planning the overthrow of national self-government. Lord Clare said, "There is not a nation on the habitable globe that has advanced in commerce, in agriculture, and manufactures with the same rapidity in the same period." Cooke, who was the official writer in favour of the Union said—"In agriculture, manufactures, wealth and prosperity, no country in the world had made such progress as Ireland." English and Irish writers, speakers, and statesmen of the period join in glowing descriptions of the rapid progress of Ireland, when the various restrictions upon her trade were abolished, and her National Parliament obtained the right to develop the resources of the country; but it is not my purpose to enter into the details of this prosperity, my object is to reach the period which it is the object of the book to describe, and to allow the distinguished Irishman, whose history of the rebellion I am connecting with previous events by this very imperfect review of the period, to tell his terrible chronicle of wrong in his own fierce but truthful style.

I have now to give some intelligible reason why a country progressing so rapidly in agriculture, commerce, science, arts, and in constitutional freedom should have been a few years later convulsed with revolution. The glowing picture of prosperity so truly painted by Lecky, in the last chapter of his second volume, is a most disappointing frontispiece to the chamber of horrors at the portals of which it stands.

In 1790, Pitt communicated to Dundas, then Irish Secretary, the desire of the Government to grant larger concessions to the Catholics than had yet entered into the minds of any but two or three of the most advanced men in the Irish Parliament. It is debatable whether in this Pitt was actuated by a broad and generous policy to emanci-



pate the 2,400,000 Catholics or to alarm the 600,000 Protestants. Possibly the usual English opportunist idea in dealing with Ireland was at the bottom of his action. If the Bill could be carried through the Irish Parliament, the Protestants who had given England such trouble by compelling concessions in matters of finance and trade; who had broken down so many barriers of monopoly by which English trade had grown upon the ruins of Irish trade, would be swamped by the Catholic vote. The Catholics who had been for a century so loyal; whose Bishops and clergy had denounced rebellion, and declared their "thankfulness to Divine Providence which, under the best of constitutions had bestowed upon the land we live in freedom exempt from anarchy; protection guarded against oppression, and a Prince calculated by his wisdom and virtue (!) (God save the mark) to preserve that happy condition of society," might be relied upon by England if their clergy and they were granted some rights to keep down the democratic tendencies of "those turbulent dissenters of the north," who cheered for America and Washington, and to outvote in England's interest the national demands of the Protestants. Indeed, it was plainly urged in England that the Catholics being entirely agricultural were less likely to collide with British trade and manufacturing interests than the Protestants; also, that being as yet entirely free from the disloyal (democratic) ideas of the Presbyterians, England should create in them a powerful body of allies. England was sick of the Irish Protestants. Swift, Lucas, Grattan, Flood, and the ever increasing number of such defenders of Irish demands had become intolerable. The loyalty of the Catholics was unquestionable. Their Bishops and Nobles were constantly manifesting it. If the Catholics had the franchise Ireland could be ruled more easily. The Catholic Church was the great Conservative force on the continent against American and French principles, and could be relied upon in Ireland to sustain English authority against Protestant autocracy and Presbyterian democracy. An outburst of indigation in the Irish Parliament was the result of this action. Westmorland and Dundas found it impossible to carry out Pitt's suggestions. The bait of Emancipation having been sufficiently dangled before the eyes of the Catholics was withdrawn, and the Presbyterians began to win allies amongst them to democratic reforms,

which became a new source of alarm to the Protestants. Then as now the land lay at the root of the Irish question. The Protestant landlords were a garrison as arbitrary and powerful as the feudal barons in England 300 years before. Lecky tells us, quoting Arthur Young, how some of them boasted that the wives and daughters of the Catholic cottars thought it no dishonour to be their concubines. We have read of this sort of thing in France before the Revolution when le grand seigneur carried the "lettre de cachet" in his pocket, by which the peasant father, brother, or protector of the woman required could be disposed of in a state prison. Gavan Duffy tells us of this infamy in Ireland in the seventeenth century—

"But worst of all thou knowest it Priest,  
The daughters of our land! with wrongs we  
blushed to name,  
Until the sword was in our hand."

It is horrible, but Barrington and Lever in their pictures of Irish society 90 years ago show the low moral plane upon which Irish country life ran. Those who have chatted with the peasantry in some of the central counties of Ireland are not unfamiliar with stories of "old Lord So-and-So" who "corrupted the country" and sent "so many young girls to America!" Two notorious instances will arise to the minds of many. In one, a so-called noble "passed to judgment in a terrible accident," and in the other, a fearful character was done to death by illegal violence—murder as some term it, but if the tales of the country side are true I prefer the former to the latter mode of characterisation. "Chesterfield, as Lord-Lieutenant, studied the condition of Irish life and left it as his opinion that 'the poor people in Ireland are used worse than negroes by these Lords and Masters.' Arthur Young tells us in 1776 'the age has improved much in humanity and the poor Irish are treated better and better,' yet even at this time he assures us the landlord is a despot with no law but his own will. . . . Nothing satisfies but unlimited submission. Sauciness will be punished with the horsewhip. A poor man would have his bones broken if he offered to lift a hand in his own defence. . . . A whole string of cars will be whipped by a footman into a ditch to make way for his master's carriage; if broken it must be taken with patience, were the owners to complain they might be horsewhipped." Young describes these Irish landlords



as coarse, drunken, brutal ruffians, and Lecky says, "No reasonable person will wonder that a country with an agrarian history like that of Ireland should have proved prolific in agrarian crime." No wonder that such a class should resist the emancipation of their slaves, but it is doubtful if Pitt had any other intention than to alarm them and create strife in Ireland out of which his chance to discredit the Irish Parliament and carry the Union might come. He could have pressed on his Catholic relief measures and overcome the opposition of the bigoted section of the Parliament. As it was a section of Catholics, despite the efforts of the Catholic Bishops, now turned away from both England and the Irish Parliament, and began to fraternise with the Presbyterians and the advanced Protestants of the north. The rise of a seditious (?) Catholic party in Ireland began in 1793. The United Irish Society had become a power. It advocated the rights of the Catholics from the American principle of the "Rights of Man." At Belfast, Dungannon, and Newry, banquets and meetings were held where Protestant and Presbyterian clergymen and laymen openly avowed Republican principles, and protested against the Holy Alliance against France. Addresses and petitions to the king against the war were circulated. Some of the addresses asked, "What is the navigation of the Scheldt to us?" "Why should we interfere because France, like Cromwell, has killed a guilty king?" "Let the rich who want war pay for it; the people are starving; trade is paralysed; Ireland has no quarrel with France!" In June the Presbyterian Synod of Ulster met. It consisted of the Presbyterian ministers of the north and the Presbytery of Dublin with a lay delegate from each parish. The Government had lately increased the *regium donum* in hopes of attaching them. The Synod drew up a loyal address, but it was significant that, it took occasion to express its dislike to the war and its satisfaction at the admission of the Catholics to the privileges of the constitution.

Whilst the rank and file of the United Irishmen were Presbyterians, the leaders were largely Protestant. Tone, Butler, Emmet, Hamilton Rowan, Napper Tandy, Arthur O'Connor, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Bond, Russell, Drennan, Neilson, and the two Sheares were all Protestants. The Catholics, though restrained by the Catholic bishops and the majority of the clergy, joined the movement in considerable numbers in

the North. It is popular to write and speak of the United Irishmen being Deistical, infidel, &c., &c. We know even in our own day how the clergy are too ready to fling such charges against reformers, even though not revolutionists. The men who dare to differ with ecclesiastical authority when it chooses to interfere at a Parliamentary or municipal election, even though their lives have been devoted to the advancement of the cause those clergy or bishops profess to have at heart, are often denounced as enemies of religion, whilst the gallant patriots who, like the men of '65, unwisely for themselves perhaps, but wisely for the nation, conspire, strike, and die in prison, or live in exile, are banned in the terrible language Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, used, or in the more measured but not less serious condemnations of Cardinal Cullen. Yet the men of '65 "rang chapel bells" that convinced Mr. Gladstone "of the depth and intensity of the Fenian movement," that "the Fenians were the very cream of the Irish race," that "the time had come to legislate to avert a danger from the empire." All this Mr. Gladstone admitted and confirmed in a correspondence not yet quite forgotten which I had the honour to have with him upon the subject in the '70's. The Fenian movement made the constitutional agitation possible, and gave it Mr. Gladstone's powerful aid "to avert a danger from the empire," to use his own words. To-day neither prelate nor priest of the Catholic Church will I think refuse to stand up whilst "that hymn that has become the marching music of the Irish race," "God Save Ireland," is sung. Ireland has gained much, and is on the way to win more by the sacrifices, sufferings, death, and exile of the Fenians. Let us remember the words of "Him who spake as never man spake" about "building the sepulchres of the prophets our fathers stoned," and try to have "in all things charity." The world takes good care to provide stoned prophets for the next generation to show its piety by building them sepulchres.

Fill up once more, we'll drink a toast to  
comrades far away;  
No nation upon earth can boast of braver  
hearts than they:  
And though they sleep in dungeons deep, or  
live outlawed and banned;  
We love them yet, we can't forget the  
"felons for our land."

In boyhood's bloom and manhood's pride,  
foredoomed by alien laws,  
Some on the scaffold proudly died for holy  
Ireland's cause;



And brothers say shall we to-day unmoved  
like cowards stand  
Whilst traitors shame and foes defame the  
"felons of our land."

The men of '98 who led the movement were men of honour and sacrifice, true to their Protestant faith. Henry Joy M'Cracken and Henry Monro, William Orr and the Presbyterian ministers who took part in the Northern rising, were sacrifices for God and humanity, as true to faith and fatherland as any Ireland ever offered up. The Presbyterian Pikemen of Ulster were true descendants of the men of the covenant, who fought, suffered, and died for their faith in Scotland, as did the persecuted Catholics for theirs in Ireland. It was these Belfast Presbyterians who a few years before drew the carriage containing a deputation of Catholic bishops going to England with a petition for a modification of the penal laws from the "Donegal Arms Hotel" down to the quay, and wished them God speed on their mission. Bishop Percy, Protestant, who had denounced the United Irishmen after the fashion of ecclesiastics, whether Latin, Anglican, or Genevese, when avenging God (?), was obliged when all was over to admit that "these miscreants of the lowest kind," as he had called them, "treated the Protestant clergy and others who fell into their hands with great humanity and according to the laws of war; but then he makes up for this act of justice by an act of bigoted injustice. He thanks God "our Ulster rebels are Protestant dissenters, and so not guilty of the atrocities of Papists in other parts of Ireland." Their great humanity, however, did not save them from the atrocities to men, women, and children that the Southern rebels were subjected to at the hands of Bishop Percy's friends. I have no doubt some of the United Irishmen may have imbibed principles not in accordance with the Sermon on the Mount, but I do not find any professions inconsistent with the Catholic faith amongst the few Catholic leaders in the organisation, nor amongst the Protestants, save perhaps in two cases, and then the madness and despair of the circumstances evoked the expressions which the recording angel when writing them down would drop a tear upon and blot out for ever. *Vae victis*, first uttered by the Pagan destroyers of Jerusalem, has been pronounced by many a Christian conqueror since, but neither Pagan nor Christian exterminators have ever equalled the English in capacity to justify their in-

human policy by poisoning the minds of after generations of the vanquished as to the character of their fathers. Protestants and Presbyterians in Ireland to-day honour the memory of Cromwell, who in Ireland perpetrated atrocities that were not excelled by the Pagan "scourge of God," Attila, nor by the Catholic scourge of the heretic Hollanders Alva. Cromwell—who upon the authority of Clarendon and Ormond, quoted and supported by Sir Jas. Mackintosh in his *History of England*—perpetrated "bloody inhumanity exceeding the Book of Martyrs and the Massacre of Amboyna." His career was one of slaughter rather than of conquest, "the more odious that he was most cruel to those who made the bravest resistance." When this monster captured any Irish city no quarter was given. Of the prisoners "the officers were all knocked on the head, every tenth soldier killed, the rest sold as slaves in the West Indies, and the work of slaughter continued upon men, women, and children." Irish Protestants and Presbyterians speak of Alva with horror as "the brute," and of Cromwell with praise as "the hero." It is sometimes admitted it was a pity he killed King Charles's Protestant soldiers and knocked down a few Protestant churches, but not one in ten knew, or care to know, that this rebel general—in my opinion justified in his rebellion—whilst engaged in civilised war against the Irish soldiers of King Charles—in my opinion fighting for a worthless cause, as some 40 years later they fought and suffered again upon the loyal but wrong side against William—was as brutal as an African savage. Again, Irish Presbyterians speak to-day disrespectfully of their gallant fathers, the men of '98,

"Who rose in dark and fearful times to  
right their native land."

In Scotland none assail the gallant rebels who fought for the Covenant at Drumclog and Bothwell Brig. In Unionist as well as Home Rule meetings songs and speeches draw the cheers with enthusiasm when the "Men of the Moss Hags" or of Culloden are spoken of. Loyalty to an united empire does not require Scotchmen to take the English view of their fathers; but speak in praise of '98 and the Pikemen of Antrim and Ballinahinch to an Irish Presbyterian crowd and hisses will be the least objectionable demonstration you will meet with. Yes, it must be admitted the English have conquered.



those turbulent dissenters of whom for half a century before '98, Irish Chief Secretaries were constantly complaining as the only "dangerously disloyal element in Ireland." Yes, it must be admitted England conquers the mental, as well as the physical, powers of nations, and by means as immoral in the former as the latter. It was immoral, as Lecky describes, to divide the Irish people into two sectarian camps in order to take away their Parliament and prevent that unity which was growing, despite every difficulty England had put in the way; and it was more immoral still to refuse to the people any kind of education that would enable them to know their country's history, and to correct the West British opinion, that the Union officials, bribed aristocracy, and State endowed church, created. Worse still—a "National" (?) system of education was established, with the avowed object of perverting the Catholics from the faith of their fathers, and with the intention of filling the Protestant and Presbyterian mind with prejudice, against the cause for which their fathers nobly died. But in the dispensation of Providence truth prevails in the end. The anniversary of '98 has come, the lives of the patriots will be studied, and tens of thousands of Irish Protestants and Presbyterians will know truth, and the truth shall make them free. Neither Scotland, nor Holland, Switzerland, nor the United States, produced men of higher purpose, nobler faith, nor purer sacrifice, than the leaders of the United Irishmen.

"Then here's their memory let it be to us a  
guiding light,  
To cheer our hearts to Liberty, and teach  
us to unite;  
Through good or ill be Ireland still, though  
sad as theirs our fate,  
And true men be you men like those of '98."

Up till 1793-4 the United Irish Society was still a loyal organisation formed for Parliamentary reform. Emmet counselled loyalty to England, and support by Ireland in all foreign wars, but urged reform and emancipation. Tone laboured in '94 and '96 to induce "The Peep o' Day Boys" (Protestants) and the "Defenders" (Catholics) to cease their miserable sectarian dissensions, chiefly agrarian, but embittered by religion so-called. He was very successful, and the Government became more and more alarmed as they saw the growing power and unity of determined men who, if reform were not conceded, would, unlike Grattan and his party, hesitate not to

invoke the God of Battles to arbitrate the question. At a meeting of the United Irish Society in Dublin, 1794, information was received that the Government had spies at work to find evidence against them. Mr. Simon Butler, Mr. Emmet, John Sheares, and others considered the matter of no importance as their objects were all legal. But English Government in Ireland can soon compel legal organisations to become illegal as they did the Land League in our own time. I was one of the promoters of that organisation and one of its inner circle. Our efforts were always directed to keeping it within the lines of strict legality. We intended to use the shreds of *constitutional* liberty which Ireland possesses to disprove the constitutionality of English rule. O'Connell failed, John Mitchel failed in this effort, and so did we. Yet we never passed beyond the lines which in England and Scotland enabled us to triumph over the Government in the Reform League agitation. I need only say that when we forced the rails at Hyde Park and stood before the soldiers, the thought passed through my mind how different the result would have been had we been Irishmen in the Phoenix Park defying what we sometime after called and proved to be the illegal action of the Government! England, a self-governed nation, loving liberty (for herself) would not have permitted the massacre and the imprisonment of her own people demanding reform, and the Government knew it and gave way at the last moment; but it was very different in Ireland, and so our open, legal, and constitutional movement in Ireland in '81 was forced to become secret and illegal by arrest, imprisonment without trial, violation of the liberty of public meeting, suppression of our newspapers without trial, and other violations of the social contract which left every man free to use against the oppressor any means of resistance God or nature might place at his disposal. As in the case of the Land League the United Irish Society was driven from constitutional to unconstitutional action—from being Reformers to being Revolutionists.

But an eventful political drama was now to be performed in Ireland. Pitt, seriously alarmed at the influence the United men were beginning to exercise over the hitherto loyal Catholics, and at the evident determination of the Patriots to appeal to arms despairing of reform, made an attempt which was either a master move of political wisdom



and justice or one of devilish cunning and oppression. Historians are divided as to Pitt's real intention in sending Lord Fitzwilliam to Ireland. Whether he really intended to carry out the just and wise programme which Earl Fitzwilliam, with the approbation of the vast majority of all parties in Ireland, announced as his intention, or whether it was another dastardly move to excite the Catholics with hopes and then crush them so as to drive them into actions that would alarm the Protestants, and so enable him to destroy the Irish Parliament and carry out the Union cannot now be settled with certainty. It may have been the former, in which case Ireland would have had no rebellion, but would have passed by orderly evolution under the control of her own free Parliament into a more peaceful and more prosperous condition than even Scotland; for, unlike that country, she would have had the one thing it needs—self-government. But if this were the intention it speedily gave way before what was after all a comparatively small opposition, and Cromwellian atrocities were again perpetrated over Ireland.

A Coalition Government was established in England in 1794-5. Pitt and his Tory party received the co-operation of Lord Fitzwilliam, the Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, and others of the most advanced Whig party. In January, 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam landed in Ireland as Lord Lieutenant. Negotiations had been entered into with Grattan, Sir John Parnell, the Ponsonbys, and other friends of the Catholics. All Ireland was excited by the rumours of large measures of Catholic relief and reform of Parliament. The Lord Chancellor, Fitzgibbon, was to be removed. It was his influence that had frustrated attempts to carry measures in favour of the Catholics on former occasions. The powerful family of the Beresfords was to be defied by the dismissal of John Beresford, Commissioner of the Revenue. It was supposed this family was so strong in Ireland no minister dare fall out with it. Lecky, vol. 3, p. 272, says, "At least a fourth of all the places in the Island were filled with dependents of the Beresfords, and during Fitzwilliam's time John Beresford was called the King of Ireland, his influence was so overwhelming." Beresford himself said it was alleged against him "that no Lord Lieutenant" (who was opposed to him) "could exist, that he had made a Lord Chancellor, a Chief Justice,

an Attorney-General, nearly made a Primate, and certainly a Commander-in-Chief; that he was at the head of the Revenue, and had a great deal of the Church, the Law, and the Army in his possession, and in fact was considered King of Ireland."

Fitzwilliam began his career by the bold stroke of dismissing Lord Chancellor Fitzgibbon and Beresford; every one knew what this meant—complete Catholic Emancipation, Grattan's darling ideal with its glowing possibilities. A united nation, the hope of Protestant Patriots in '82 was to be an accomplished fact. Cooke, Secretary at War, one of the dismissed supporters of ascendancy, wrote to Lord Westmoreland, in England, full accounts of the indignation that was felt in Ireland at Fitzwilliam's policy. "Everything was now managed by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Milton, the two Ponsonbys, Grattan, and Yelverton. Lord Fitzwilliam is laying the Crown at the feet of Ned Byrne (of the Catholic Committee) by offering him full powers on the three conditions of supporting the grants in aid of the war against France; which the Committee have hitherto opposed; of opposing Parliamentary reform to which they are pledged; and of supporting the peace of the country which they have notoriously disturbed these four years."

"What is proposed must lead to Union or Separation . . . Mr. Pitt seems to have tied all his old friends to the stake for Lord Fitzwilliam to flog. . . . The dismissal of Beresford is one of the sorest wounds English Government could receive."

But very different was the feeling in Ireland to this dismissed placeman's opinion. The Protestant Corporation of Londonderry sent an address expressing their wish to see all Ireland united in one interest. Petitions with half-a-million signatures for the complete emancipation of the Catholics were laid upon the table of the House of Commons. All classes of Catholics, clericals and democrats, were thoroughly roused, and their hopes raised to certainty. Lecky says, vol. 3, p. 285, "Never since 1782 had an expression of opinion so strong and genuine been brought to Parliament. The Protestants of Ireland, as a body, were ready to concede what was asked. An autocratic faction, powerful from its borough influence, disliked the measure as threatening their monopoly, but it would not resist the Government." (Cooke, himself, declared it could be easily passed.) "The Protestant gentry



had many faults, but they were at least free from religious bigotry, and, unlike the English Ministers, they at least knew Ireland. They saw that the United Irishmen (Protestant democrats) were successfully using the Catholic question as a lever for uprooting the masses (the Catholics) from their old allegiance to Kenmare and the Norman Catholic West British aristocracy, that under the influence of the democratic spirit of the French Revolution the ascendancy of property, rank, and *intelligence* " (God save the mark, Mr. Lecky!) "was strained and weakened. Multitudes of ignorant and turbulent men were drifting away from their old moorings, and beginning to follow new and dangerous leaders." (Was it not time, Mr. Lecky?) "The evil could only be met by at once depriving the agitator of his most formidable weapon by conferring political power on men who were tolerably certain not to misuse it. There were doubtless many who wished the Catholic question had never been raised, but such regrets were now idle. It remained for the Government to decide between a policy of concession or resistance, the latter nearly certain to lead to bloodshed."

This excellent statement of the situation calls from me a word of comment. The *bête noir* of all English or West British writers about the '98 Rebellion, and of "Union Jack Catholics" in particular, is "French Revolutionary principles." Like other bogies to frighten the uninformed this passes without question. It is assumed that some frightful delusion from the enemy of mankind got hold of the brain and heart of France, and at the close of the 18th century instigated a band of Irish Protestants to rouse their Catholic countrymen to a sense of the degradation of a century of slavery and seek the rights of man, if need be, by an appeal to the God of Battle. There is a point of view from which one might take it that the ideas that took hold of Hamilton Rowan, Napper Tandy, Rev. Dr. Jackson, Oliver Bond, William Orr, Arthur O'Connor, Robert Emmet, the brothers Sheares, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Henry Joy M'Cracken, Harry Monro, James Hope, Wolfe Tone, and Rev. Mr. Porter, were from the spirit of evil. These men were, like St. Paul, born free. No penal laws, no social ban was upon their lives, they could take their place politically and socially in the front ranks of the West British garrison. Ruler and priest would pay them respect and deference; they could eat, drink,

and be merry, and cultivate a pharisaic spirit which they could mistake for charity by being kind and generous to their enslaved countrymen as individuals, but, at the same time, drink to the glorious, pious, and immortal memory, and "confusion to the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender," but a Divine principle compelled them to sacrifice everything for their down-trodden brethren. The Catholic who got these French principles into his head saw a chance of escaping from a condition of degrading slavery into one of freedom and equality, but the Protestant only saw the satisfaction that would be his when his Catholic neighbour was as free as himself, and the national unity of Ireland had dignified and educated his emancipated countrymen. For a century Ireland had been a nation of slave-holders and slaves. Mr. Lecky's "rank, wealth, and intelligence" with its "proper influence" had not remedied that horrible state of things. It was time some other principles got into men's minds, and that "multitudes of ignorant and turbulent men" should "drift away from such old moorings," political or ecclesiastical. "By their fruits ye shall know them," and it was not difficult to decide between the crafty statesmanship of England and her West British garrison and the doctrines of the "Rights of Man" that came from America through France. There were English statesmen of intellect and virtue; there were West Britons of the Grattan type whose names still sound stirring to the men of Ireland; but these had failed, and the spirit that moved on the face of the waters when the earth was without form and void moved at the close of the 18th century upon the minds of men in America, France, and Ireland, to ring an alarm that would produce results the still small voice of reason had not accomplished.

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform,  
He plants His footsteps on the sea  
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs  
And works His Sovereign will.

Is it necessary to tell the world to-day Robert Emmet and William Orr were nearer the Christ than Beresford, Fitzgibbon, or Cooke—that belief in God and in man were guiding principles of their lives and their support when they walked through the Valley of the Shadow of Death? Need I say that Tone, Rowan,



Bond, Porter, Jackson, whereas intelligent as Camden, Duigenan, Norbury, or the Protestant Archbishop of Cashel? Were any of the "turbulent or ignorant men," Protestant or Catholic, who adopted these "French Principles" capable of the actions of infamy perpetrated during the rebellion and after, by these men of "rank, wealth, and intelligence," who with such merciless cruelty and lust first goaded the nation to rebellion and then suppressed it with such savage inhumanity? Out upon this property, rank, and intelligence, argument! It has been the cry of the oppressor against the reformer in every age. The greatest of all reformers was Himself charged with the want of "property, rank, and intelligence" of His following. "He put down the mighty from their seat and exalted the humble and meek. He filled the hungry with good things and the rich sent He empty away." And He left to His followers in every age the certainty that "the disciple is not above his master, and as they have persecuted Me they will persecute you also." The crown of thorns is for the Christ-like man, whether his path be moral, political, or social reform. The men of '98, '48, '68, in Ireland gave proof to add to that of every age that this is true. But what were these terrible "French Principles," and what terrible power let them loose upon the world? For 100 years France had lost her Parliament. From Louis le Grand to Louis the 16th, the King of France was absolute. Paris became a moral cesspool of filth, as vile as the Babylon of Sardinapolis or the Rome of Vitellius. Noble and bishop sank into a condition of which decency forbids further allusion. La Vendée and Brittany had nobles and priests who stood out as witnesses for faith and fatherland, but they were almost alone in their protest against the wickedness and tyranny of the times. All I have described as worst in the treatment of the Catholic peasantry of Ireland was inflicted not by a Protestant garrison, but by their own Catholic nobles upon the French industrial classes. In 1789 the extravagance of the licentious Court of France had brought the country to such a condition of starvation and poverty that national bankruptcy compelled the King to summon the Parliament. With joy and shouts of loyalty to the young King the States General met. It devised a mode of getting the necessary supplies, and then proceeded to reform the laws of France. Nobles, priests, and commoners

were like a band of brothers in that Parliament, and copying largely from the Constitution of the United States, these great men proceeded to pass a series of laws that have been the wonder of the intelligent world. This Parliament, like the "Long Parliament" of England, finished its work before it dissolved. But scarcely had it begun when the King having got the supplies to pay his horde of vultures—the worthless crowd of noble pensioners, men and women who formed his Court, and maddened the starving people by the displays of luxury, feasting equipages and insolent menials—ordered the States General to dissolve! His purpose was served. The reforms promised were the method by which he had got the money required. The Parliament refused to dissolve. The King sent soldiers to turn it out. The Parliament called a guard of citizens to protect it. The King then appeared to accept the situation, and the Parliament went on with its work; but all the time troops are being poured into Paris, and at last the King thinks the time has come for action. His troops begin to disperse the crowds that gather to protest against the action of the Court. A few people are killed. The people take the Bastille, and fighting is begun, but as yet no great harm is done. France still cheers the King. He enters Paris midst hundreds of thousands of armed citizens. He attends Mass on July 15, and then signs the appointment of La Fayette and Bailly as chiefs of the militia; agrees to restore the reforming Minister Necker, and returns to Versailles amidst shouts of *vive la nation* and *vive le roi*.

Meantime, in spite of the turbulence around, the Assembly continued its noble work of creating a Constitution for the long-enslaved people of France. It devoted its main energy to the preparation of a liberal constitution and a declaration of the rights of man. Now, what was this terrible wicked fulmination which brought in upon France the armies of the so-called Holy Alliance—England, Prussia, Austria, &c.—and has been used ever since to terrify people into submitting to tyranny lest these terrible French Revolution principles should produce the horrors of '92! On the 4th of August, 1789, the Vicomte de Noailles rose and said that there was only one way of giving prosperity to France; the people were in arms to claim their rights, and it was the duty of the Assembly to make those rights



legal, as well as moral: "I propose, therefore—1. That the committee be instructed to propose a declaration that every tax shall henceforward be levied in proportion to the income of each individual. 2. That the burdens of the State be equally borne by every member of the State. 3. That all feudal claims, which are not of a personal nature, shall be redeemable at a fair valuation. 4. That all the claims of the lord, which are of a personal nature, such as personal service, &c., shall cease without any ransom." The motion was seconded by the Duc d'Aiguillon; M. le Grand pointed out that personal services, such as the *corvée*, ought not to be redeemed because they were inherently vicious, while the real rights, such as rents, ought to be fairly valued and ransomed. The motion was carried unanimously, and then, one after another, were sacrificed all feudal privileges, the nobles out-doing each other in the patriotic strife. The destruction of the local courts of justice, where the nobles ruled, the suppression of all sinecures, the abolition of the Game Laws, the seigneurial right of maintaining rabbit warrens, fisheries, and dovecotes, followed each other in quick succession. The clergy relinquished all fees taken from the poor, and proposed the abolition of all pluralities. Thus, in one single night was swept away the feudal system of France, and the burdens of centuries were lifted from the shoulders of the people. "This night changed the face of the kingdom; it rendered all Frenchmen equal; they might all enter professions, aspire to property, take part in trade. In fact, this night was a revolution as important as the insurrection of July 14th, of which it was the consequence." These decrees were all referred to a committee, to be reduced into laws, and the only discussion of any importance was that which dealt with the clerical tithes. Abbé Sièyes strongly urged that the tithes were private property, and must not be touched; but Mirabeau answered: "No; tithes are not property . . . they are a contribution applied to that part of the public service which relates to the ministers of the altar; they are the subsidies wherewith the nation salaries the officers of morality and instruction. The nation abolishes ecclesiastical tithes, because they are an onerous method of paying a portion of the public service to which they are destined, and because it is easy to replace them in a manner less expensive and more equal." The

discussion was put an end to by a few of the clergy offering to give up tithes, and the rest speedily followed their example, the Archbishop of Paris declaring that the Church was willing to trust to the nation to provide the necessary funds for maintaining public worship.

The Assembly now returned to the consideration of the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Three forms were presented by M. de la Fayette, Abbé Sièyes, and M. Mounier. None of these were, however, satisfactory, and a committee of five members, among whom was Mirabeau, was appointed to draw one up. Mirabeau's hand may be traced plainly in this celebrated Declaration, which is similar in many points to that contained in an "Address to the Dutch," which he published in 1788. The date of the adoption of this Declaration is variously stated as the 18th, 20th, and 26th of August. It consists of seventeen articles, of which the most important are the following:—"1. Men are born, and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can only be founded on the common good. 2. The aim of political association is the conservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; these rights are—liberty, property, safety, and resistance of tyranny. 3. The principle of sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. . . . 4. Liberty consists in being able to do everything which does not injure any one else; thus the exercise of man's natural rights is only limited by the same exercise of rights by other members of society. . . . 5. Laws may only forbid actions injurious to society. . . . 6. Law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have a right to assist in making laws, either personally or through their representatives. . . . 7. No man can be accused, arrested, nor detained, except by law, and according to legal forms. . . . 10. None should be disturbed for his opinions, even for religious ones, provided that their manifestation does not disturb public order. 11. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious Rights of Man; every citizen, then, may speak, write, and print freely, being responsible only to the law for abuse of this liberty. 14. All citizens have the right of examining personally, or by their representatives, into the necessity of public taxes, and of consenting to them freely. . . . 17. Property being an inviolable and sacred right, none can be deprived of it,



except when public necessity, legally proved, evidently requires it, and then only under condition of a just equivalent." Thus nobly did the National Assembly redeem the trust placed in their hands, and through Europe rang a cry, which America had earlier heard; a cry which reached alike the palace of the Monarch and the hovel of the serf, shaking the throne of the one, and glowing on the hearth of the other. "Ye are free, ye are equal; your union is for the common good. O Monarch, descend from your throne, for henceforth you are only the chief magistrate, freely elected, of a free nation. O peasant, raise your head, and look all men in the face, for your brow also is circled with the diadem of sovereignty, since you too are one of the people, the only King!"

Having thus dug deep the foundation, it remained to build thereupon the edifice of a free constitution, and during the month of September the practical questions of politics agitated the Assembly, and were echoed in the clubs and in the Palais Royal; for although only the Assembly could decree, yet all men might discuss, and the eager Paris populace took its full share in these deliberations. The first question was: "Shall the Legislature consist of one Chamber or of two?" Lally-Tollendal, Mounier, and Necker were all in favour of a Chamber of Deputies, and of a Senate; Mirabeau in favour of a single Chamber. And indeed, it is hard to see how a Second Chamber is defensible when once it is acknowledged that all are equal, and that the only right of making laws for the people resides in the people. To have a Second Chamber is really to say: "The people alone can rightfully make laws, but yet over this people we will put a class, which shall judge, accept, or reject, as it seems good to it." But if it be true that the only rightful authority is in the people, then this second power, which is not elected by the people, is a wrongful authority, a tyranny that may justly be overthrown. It is argued that a single Chamber would be hasty, and pass crude and ill-thought-out laws. The more reason, then, is there that the wisest heads in the nation should belong to that popular Assembly, and teach, judge, control it by virtue of their brain and not of their office, as brethren speaking to brethren, and not as superiors addressing inferiors. The only country where a Second Chamber has been other than a serious stumbling-block is England, with its Lords and

Commons; and why is this? Because in England the House of Lords is as the toy bladder of a child, which looks large and imposing, but, pricked with a needle, collapses without resistance. The House of Lords is only bearable because of its weakness, and the signal of its prolonged opposition would be the signal for its dissolution. As it is, this Second House has often delayed reforms for years, and has embittered and exasperated the strife, without a chance of victory. We want no drag on the wheels of progress, for there is ever drag sufficient in the sloth, in the indifference, in the selfishness of men; and the path is a path upward and not downward, and there is wanted a spur to the horses, but no drag on the wheels. With two Chambers it would have taken ten years to destroy French feudalism, cut down by a single Chamber in a single night. The indivisibility of the Assembly was carried on September 8th by 844 votes against 89.

The next important point regarded the Royal Sanction. "Should the King have a veto on the decrees passed by the Assembly?" and on this question Paris was specially moved, vehemently protesting against the veto, which was regarded as a remnant of tyranny. Mirabeau being in Paris, and recognised, the people surrounded him with tears in their eyes: "M. le Comte, you are a friend of the people; save us, defend us against the traitors who would bring back despotism. If the King obtains this veto, of what use is the National Assembly? Ah, M. le Comte, all is lost!" But Mirabeau, spite of this, argued earnestly for the veto. Robespierre, as earnestly, against: "He who says that one man has a right to oppose himself to the law, says that the will of one man is above the will of all, he says that the nation is nothing, and that one man is everything. If he adds that this right belongs to him who is endowed with the executive power, he says that the man chosen by the nation to execute the will of the nation, has the right to contradict and enchain the will of that nation." This is a point that concerns us all to-day, it being one of those which we shall have to decide. Shall a veto be vested in any one man? It appears to me that the only possible veto consistent with liberty is the kind of veto that a Prime Minister has at the present moment. If the legislative body passes a bill which he cannot accept, he may dissolve Parliament, and go to the country; and if the country endorses



his veto, well and good; but if not, he must go out, and the measure is then carried in spite of him. The majority of the Assembly went with Robespierre, and a compromise was suggested—a suspensive veto instead of an absolute—and this was at last accepted by a majority of 673 against 325. The existence of the legislative body was fixed at two years, and the person of the King was declared inviolable, and the Crown hereditary in the male line, for the Assembly was, as we have before stated, Monarchical and not Republican.

All had now been well with France but for the weakness and duplicity of the King. Like Charles the First of England, he intrigued with foreign nations. The feudal nobles deserted France, and to the number of nearly 10,000, mustered on the frontier with the invaders. The Kings of Europe declared that the situation of Louis concerned the interests of all the Sovereigns of Europe, and at same time agreed that some of the provinces of France should be their own reward for putting down the Assembly, and giving Louis the XVI. once more absolute power. Thus the gauntlet against liberty was thrown down by the Kings of Europe; and France, her proud soul in arms, took it up, and flinging down her gage of battle to the despots—the head of the King who had committed high treason against his country—she poured her ragged, badly-armed conscripts to the frontier, and a war of 25 years began, during which she stabled her horses in every capital in Europe.

But law dies amidst the clash of arms. La Vendee, in arms for the King, with its priests and nobles who had never shared in the vileness of Paris or the Court, but lived united with their people. Civil war in Paris. The armies of France falling back before the Prussians and Austrians on the frontier, the British fleet threatening the coast, the mob of the Hotel de Ville, with its wild men, mastering the men of the Assembly, and finally sending them to the guillotine. All these horrors and many more were the direct result of the Powers of Europe interfering with the peaceful evolution of liberty as it would have worked out had the national spirit not been roused to madness by the danger to the country's independence. Finally, the successful soldier appears who sweeps Europe before him; national vanity bestows the crown of empire upon him; he plays his wicked part; at Waterloo meets his

reward; and "He who seeth the end from the beginning" and "weaveth the ages as it were on His loom" has "made the wrath of man to praise Him." Forty years of peace after 1815 enabled the Constitution of France, created by the Assembly in 1789-90 and carried over Europe by the French armies, to take root amongst the people till not a nation in Europe, Great Britain excepted, had failed to obtain emancipation from the Feudal Land Laws that existed everywhere before the French Revolution, and all, Britain included, had developed higher principles of Government. As for the great men of France, not Napoleon and his captains, but the party of the Gironde—the Republicans of '92 and that earlier party of bishops, priests, nobles, artisans, and peasants who, with loyalty to France and respect for the King, framed the Constitution of '89-'90—their noble lives and terrible fate (most of them died on the scaffold or in exile) are a warning to all who are called upon to resist tyrants or tyranny. As a rule it is woe to the patriot who must lead a demoralised and enslaved people out of bondage into the possibilities of freedom. Murmurings, slanders, mutiny against him will be certain. "Who made you a ruler or a judge?" will be the insulting question from the men for whom he yesterday killed an oppressor; but while it is true that revolutions often devour, like Saturn, their offspring, greater woe be to the patriot who shrinks before any or all these things when the path of duty lies before him from fearlessly leading on his fellows. Killing kings does not make Republics, shouting liberty does not give it. Liberty in its highest form—the Republic—is made by every book of moral or physical science issued by the press, by every type of nobler manhood and of loftier womanhood, by every effort of freer thinking and more correct speaking, these are the sources of that Republican virtue that will make our Republic one day appear.

And when the nations onward march  
To better days to be,  
Our Irish flag shall float among  
The banners of the free.  
Its colour then will speak of hope  
Like sunshine's golden sheen,  
And all the world be better for  
Our wearing of the green.

Lord Fitzwilliam's policy carried Ireland with it. No opposition was offered when Grattan introduced the Catholic Relief Bill into Parliament. Lecky says of the matter, "One fact is certain, that if the Catholic question was



not settled in 1795 rather than in 1829 it is the English Government, and it alone, that was responsible for the delay."

Beresford went over to England to appeal to the King, and to set his friends into action. In a few weeks Fitzwilliam noted with astonishment in letters from Pitt and Portland expressions of dissatisfaction at the encouragement he was giving to Grattan and the friends of Catholic Relief. "The deferring of the measure," Portland wrote, "would be the means of doing a greater service to the British Empire than it has been capable of receiving since the Revolution." The dismissal of Beresford was found fault with by Pitt. Some time before this Portland had written informing Fitzwilliam that the King had consented to his proposal to bestow a Peerage upon Wolfe, who was to be removed with Toler, afterwards Lord Norbury, from their positions as attorney and solicitor-general to make way for Ponsonby and Curren, friends of his policy; but now a letter ignoring all this arrived, and charging Fitzwilliam with being indiscreet and hasty in the matter. Fitzwilliam saw clearly the English minister had changed his mind, and he met the situation in a bold and honest way. In reply to a long argument of Portland's against the whole policy of Catholic Emancipation, Fitzwilliam, now convinced that the Government of England contemplated, though it dare not avow, the repeal of the constitution of '82, and a *Legislative Union*, which he knew had been long entertained, and which Westmorland had assured them could only be carried by keeping the Catholics and Protestants in contention, he wrote Pitt, "I am at a loss to conjecture what those benefits are which it is expected will accrue to the British Empire by deferring the consideration of this question (the Relief Bill). Can it be in the contemplation of any man that a state of disturbance or rebellion here will tend to the desirable end, which I think I discover in your letter, of an union between the two kingdoms? But are the means risked such as are justifiable, or such as any man would wish to risk in hope of attaining the end? Through such a medium I look for an union I am ready to grant, but it is not the union of Ireland with Great Britain, but with France." . . . "But supposing the object attainable in the end by such means, it must be allowed to be at a distance, and not a

moral certainty. Who, then, will advise to be hunting after such a distant and contingent good at the evident and admitted price of an immediate evil." He then proceeded to argue the whole question of the justice and sound policy of Emancipation, and wound up by stating he could carry it with the consent of almost the entire Protestant population. But Pitt had decided. Portland had, like the unionist-liberals of our day—Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Goschen, and others—become more tory, than the party he had coalesced with; and in a letter, which terminated a long personal and political friendship with Lord Fitzwilliam, he gave that high-minded Englishman no choice but to resign.

Pitt had accomplished his objects by Lord Fitzwilliam's short administration. He had got a grant of £200,000 for the British Navy—a vote for which no precedent but one existed, that was a vote carried by Grattan for half that amount in 1782 in gratitude for the concession of independence. He had also obtained a vote for the army which increased the regulars and militia to 40,000 men. Grattan's generosity, as upon the memorable and fatal occasion when he differed with Flood, had again lost his country's cause. Fitzwilliam wrote with honest pride of the loyalty that dictated these votes, and that kept "all subjects of bargain between the countries out of sight." These votes should have followed, not preceded, the reforms the Irish Parliament required from England! We have heard a deal about "French principles" amongst the Irish people, but there were other French principles than those which had spread amongst the people. These were the principles of despotism and duplicity practised by the Court of France and well imitated by England. When King Louis XVI. summoned the States General in 1789 to give him supplies, and to devise reforms as soon as he had got the supplies, he wished no more legislation and tried to dismiss the Parliament. The English Government, hard pressed for money and men, held out a promise of reform till it got what it wanted, then it compelled the honest minister to resign and refused the reform. Certainly "French principles" had to do with the Rebellion. The principles of liberty asserted by the French people made the Irish resolved upon citizen rights, and the principles of despotism and duplicity in which Pitt imitated the French King drove the maddened people to arms.



Grattan has left it on record "that the ministers excited a domestic fever at the hazard of the general interest for no object, or for an object too despicable or too criminal to be mentioned." Lecky says the evidence in support of this charge is very strong. Pitt "may have foreseen that if Grattan and Ponsonby carried the promised reforms and gave a popular character to the Parliament of Ireland, the whole system of its past government would be infallibly destroyed, and the chances of obtaining a legislative union indefinitely diminished." The report of the resignation of Earl Fitzwilliam came like a bolt from the blue upon Ireland. Dr. Hussey, one of the ablest Catholic Bishops of his time, who had been largely employed by the Government in negotiating with the Irish Catholics, and in restraining them from joining the united Irishmen, wrote Burke that the Catholics were so thoroughly loyal that were the French to land there were not five of them in Ireland worth £10 who would not spill their blood to resist the invaders. Some weeks after he wrote, "The disastrous news of Earl Fitzwilliam's recall is come, and Ireland is now on the brink of civil war." Lord Charlemont, who, though a kind-hearted and patriotic Irishman, was too narrow in his Protestantism to support Catholic Emancipation, declared the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam was "utterly ruinous," and he predicted that by next Christmas the mass of the people would be in the hands of the United Irishmen.

No people ever gave more convincing proof to a Government of gratitude for small favours than had been given by the Catholics of Ireland. I do not praise them for it. Then, as now, they too readily gave for an instalment that which should only have been given, if at all, for the payment in full of their just demands. When the Relief Bill of 1793 was given the Catholic declarations of loyalty raised the Bank Stock (Hobart asserted) 10 per cent. The Catholic Convention to gratify the Government immediately dissolved itself, but before doing so it passed a resolution calling upon the Catholics to co-operate in all loyal and constitutional means to obtain Parliamentary Reform. It voted £2,000 for a statue of the King. Well, one of the counsels of perfection is to love your enemies, and to do good to them who hate you and spitefully use you, but I don't know that even loyalists, like Dr. Troy or Cardinal Cullen, or even the Irish Bishops, whose intrigue to

give the English Government the veto upon the Papal appointment of Irish Bishops O'Connell and the inferior clergy defeated after a long struggle, would have considered that the early Christians were called upon by Christ's command to erect statues to Nero or Dioclesian for mitigating the ferocity of the persecutions. However, the Catholic Convention also voted £1,500, and a gold medal to Wolfe Tone, £500 to Simon Butler for his Digest of the Popery Laws, and a plate of the value of 100 guineas to each of the five gentlemen who had gone to England to present the Catholic petition to the King. The Catholic prelates expressed their gratitude for the Relief Bill. The United Irishmen congratulated the Catholics upon the measure of relief, but passionately urged them to stand by the movement for Parliamentary reform; but the Catholics were quiescent and the constitutional movement in the north perceptibly abated. Pitt was no fool. He understood the situation thoroughly. He knew that the Irish people were growing into a nation, and that could only be prevented in one way. Protestant and Catholic must be divided, and a rebellion must be risked in order to destroy that national centre—the Irish Parliament—around which a nation's life was rapidly gathering. An attempt was made by the Catholics to prevent the frightful disasters certain to follow the recall of Fitzwilliam. Strong petitions were sent to London expressing sentiments creditable to the Catholics as Christians and as Irishmen. Irish Protestants of our own day would do well to consider the self-denial and generosity expressed in these documents. When will Irish Protestants learn to feel and act from similar motives and principles towards their Catholic fellow countrymen? Without a single dissentient voice the following resolutions were passed—"That we are sincerely and unalterably attached to the rights, liberties, and independence of our native country, and we pledge ourselves collectively and individually to resist even our own emancipation, if proposed to be conceded upon the ignominious terms of an acquiescence in the fatal measure of an union with the sister kingdom. That whilst we make this undisguised declaration of our sentiments in order to satisfy the public mind we are of opinion that a measure so full of violence and ruin will never be hazarded. Convinced as we are that no set of men will arrogate to themselves a power which is contrary



to the ends and purposes of all government—a power to surrender the liberties of their country and to seal the slavery of future generations.” The noblest lessons in patriotism the literature of the world contains is found in Exodus, Chap. xxxii., 31, 32, Moses stood before the Lord and said—“Oh, this people have sinned a great sin. . . . Yet now if thou wilt, forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book.” I’ve often thought that next to this come some of the acts of devotion to Ireland of the persecuted Irish Catholics. Here we have a people who for 100 years had suffered as I have told. A Protestant Parliament, a foreign race of landlords, and penal laws such as no people ever endured had made them insulted and tormented slaves in their own country, yet such is their devotion to nationality and constitutional liberty that they refuse and repudiate the concession of citizen rights if it is to be won by selling the birthright of Irishmen. They will continue slaves and wait till their Protestant fellow countrymen concede to them the rights of citizens and men by an Act of the Parliament of Ireland, but they will not take these rights as the price of their treachery to that Parliament cruel as it has been to them. When the Protestants of Ireland a few years ago were holding meetings in London, and sending delegations over England and Scotland, asking the British people to refuse the restoration to Ireland of that Parliament which by force, fraud, and corruption was taken from the grandfathers of these very Protestants, and when reading the arguments of ignorance and fear—that the Catholics could not be trusted to act fairly towards the Protestant minority—I often meditated upon the strangeness of the situation. The grandfathers of these very Catholics of whom these Protestants were afraid, stood by them in their defence of the National Parliament—priest and people, a few bishops excepted. I have lived through and taken part for a generation in the fight for the restoration of that Parliament. Once or twice I thought it certain I’d see the opening of it. It was my intention to avail myself of an honour more than once offered me by my warm-hearted countrymen, and when that National Assembly would crown our triumph I hoped, if but for a Session or two, to spare from an active business life the time that would enable me to enjoy the pride and satisfaction of sitting and working in that “old house at home,”

consecrated by the memories of Grattan and Flood, Charlemont and Ponsonby, and the patriotic men “whose distant footsteps yet echo down the corridors of time.” That hope is now rapidly dying, but faith in “Home Rule” or “National Self-Government” becoming an accomplished fact is as strong in my mind as it was 40 years ago. I am as strong in Protestant principles as any man in or out of Ireland. It is because I hold such faith in truth triumphing where it has fair play I have no fear of Catholicism. My Protestantism teaches me to treat Catholicism with the respect due to an ancient and noble force for God and human progress, which still holds within its folds the largest portion of the Christian world. It contained in past times and still contains men of the noblest and purest lives, men of sacrifice for truth and righteousness, men of science and philosophy, men of patriotism, statesmanship, and that charity which is the greatest of all. Holding firmly by the principle of the Reformation, “private judgment in matters of religion,” and regarding Protestantism as more adapted to the law of evolution than Catholicism, I cannot see the propriety of treating with disrespect that determined and undying adherence to the principle of an infallible guide or revelation in matters of religion which the Catholic Church displays, seeing that until well on in the present century the Protestant churches laid down as dogmatically their obedience to an infallible guide or revelation. This is the Catholic faith which, “Except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved,” was the general confession in the united churches of England and Ireland in my early years. The Presbyterian and Calvinistic churches have, in the Westminster Confession of Faith, extreme dogmatic teachings still held of binding obligation. If Protestantism assert the right to change or modify its creeds and confessions, and even to question the nature of the inspiration of its infallible guide—the Bible—surely respect for the memory of our Protestant fathers who held as firmly to the infallibility, verbal and plenary, of the Holy Scriptures as the Catholics do to their infallible revelation, should compel us to treat their sincerity with respect. I leave theological controversy to those who possess enough of the special learning and the special grace to reason upon such subjects in love. I have tried through life to induce my countrymen to reason upon that which



is far more easily agreed upon—their common interests as Irish citizens. If Catholic Belgium can show to the world a Protestant minority treated nationally and socially in all things as free citizens, and if Protestant Holland, the land of William the Deliverer, can give us the same object lesson in its treatment of the Catholic minority, surely Irish Catholics, who above all the Catholic peoples of the world can boast of having abstained from persecution in the days of their power, political or social, can be trusted to act towards a Protestant minority with justice. I hold that Protestantism has never had a fair chance in Ireland. It has been associated with political and social oppression. It has been a mere garrison planted by the sword and used by landlords to appropriate the resources and industry of Ireland to their private use. Meanwhile, Catholicism has been permitted to stand out as the friend of social, civil, and religious liberty, and since Protestants became untrue to the principles of their fathers, the men of '82 and '98, Catholicism has been able to stand truly as the chief defender of those national principles in which Ireland's greatest men, the men of the Irish Protestant Parliament, gloried. When Irish Protestantism stands forth for the right of Ireland in all purely Irish affairs to make her own laws, provided such are not in conflict with those rights of minorities and other established principles of social compacts, nor calculated to interfere with the strength and integrity of the Empire; when it becomes as patriotic as Belgian Protestantism or Dutch Catholicism; in short, when it becomes Irish instead of West British Protestantism, then it will have a fair chance in our Irish isle. Catholicism will be deprived of some adventitious supports which it possesses, not perhaps to its spiritual advantage. The names of great Irishmen who are the political saints of the Catholic people, instead of being solely the possession of Catholic orators and historians when rousing the enthusiasm of Catholic audiences upon the grand old story of Faith and Fatherland, will become also the property of Protestant orators and historians so as to deprive Catholicism of that monopoly of patriotic names she possesses. And besides, when Protestants and Catholics come to glory in the same heroes and deeds, to weep over the same sad events and joy over the same past glories, they will soon grow to tolerate and love each other as fellow-countrymen, to compete

with each other by good works and kind hearts to prove which is the True Church by its power to make good men.

But as we are now about to enter upon that terrible time when the cold-blooded, immoral, and malign statesmanship of England produced a period of atrocities that lasted as long and were more horrible than the "Reign of Terror" in France in '92. The guillotine was bad, but the pitchcap, the triangle, and the shooting of unarmed men and women, as related further on by Mr. Mitchel and which can be confirmed by Mr. Lecky, were many times worse. It is to be hoped this centenary year will bring before the eyes of Englishmen some conception of what Mr. Gladstone well called the "ruffianism" by which the Union was carried. When England grasps the facts of the situation, that legislation will come that will make real union between Great Britain and Ireland. I now give a few quotations from Lecky, the importance of which will be apparent as the reader goes through the horrors of '98.

Martial law having been proclaimed by General Lake in Belfast and the North, Grattan asked "Who are the people whom the ministers consign to execution? They are the men who placed William the Third on the throne. . . . The Government have declared they will persist in prescribing the Catholics; they now consign the Catholics to military execution." Charles James Fox said in the British Parliament, "The character of the men of the north of Ireland has been severely stigmatized. . . . They are indeed the old leaven that saved the country from the tyranny of Charles the First and James the Second." This act of General Lake was admitted by the Crown lawyers to be illegal, as Lecky, vol. iv., p. 20, tells us; but what matter, a rebellion was to be forced for the ulterior purpose.

In 1797, Pelham consulted General Loftus as to the state of Munster. The reply was, "I think the Munster Catholics are loyal and attached to good order and government; the promoters of sedition either come from the North or from Dublin." John Giffard, the celebrated Orange leader, an officer in the Dublin militia, is quoted by Lecky as follows:—"The 'Ancient Britons' burned a great number of houses, and the object of emulation between them and the Orange yeomen seems to be who shall do most mischief to wretches who certainly may have seditious minds, but who are quiet and incapable of resist-



anee. . . . I was directed by the smoke and flames of burning houses, and by the dead bodies of boys and old men slain by the Britons, though no opposition whatever had been given by them, and, as I shall answer to Almighty God, I believe a single gun was not fired but by the Britons or the yeomanry. I declare there was nothing to fire at, old men, women, and children excepted." Sixteen prisoners were taken, "poor, wretched peasants, whom they marched into Newry, and were asked why they made any prisoners at all, meaning we should have killed them! Next day they were all proved innocent!" Giffard's Orange heart had good Irish instincts, as had the hearts of many of the Orange yeomen. He wrote a letter to Cooke (*most private*—Dundalk, June 5, 1797) giving a long and terrible account of these matters. Plowden describes them as follows:—"Information had been lodged that a house near Newry contained arms: a party of the Ancient Britons repaired to the house, but not finding any arms they set it on fire. The peasantry came running to extinguish the flames, thinking it the result of accident." (The people had not become accustomed to General Lake's martial law, but they were soon to learn its meaning.) "As they came up they were attacked and cut down by the soldiers. Thirty were killed, including a woman and two children. An old man of 70 fled to some adjacent rocks, and upon his knees implored mercy; his head was cut off at a blow." This happened while as yet not a hostile shot had been fired, nor any rising attempted. Lecky gives us an account of the Orange Society, which, coming from him, it is well to quote. Mr. Mitchel deals with that organisation, but British readers may regard him as a partizan. "At first, as we have seen, Orangism was simply a form of outrage—the Protestant side of a faction fight which had long been raging in certain counties of the North amongst the tenants and labourers of the two religions. . . . The name of Orange was not even at this time associated with Ulster, only with outrages in Armagh." As the United Men took the side of the Catholics, the Orangemen gradually gravitated into the yeomanry. "It was intended to be a loyal society for maintaining the constitution on an exclusively Protestant basis, but it included all the most fanatical and intolerant Protestantism in the province, and it inherited from its earlier stage

traditions and habits of violence and outrage, which its new leaders could not wholly repress." General Lake was just the man to suit such an organisation, and to encourage it. He wrote—"I much fear those villains" (the Presbyterians of Ulster) "will not give us the opportunity of treating them in the summary way we all wish. You may rest assured they won't have much mercy if we can once begin. Surely *The Northern Star*" (a Protestant Belfast paper) "should be stopped. . . . May I not be allowed to seize and burn the whole apparatus. Belfast must be punished most severely. I'll do all I can to thin the country of these rebellious scoundrels by sending them on board the tender." He complained that complete martial law had not been proclaimed. "I wish we had complete power to destroy their houses, or try some of them by *our law* if they did not bring in their arms." This is the warrior who, when he encountered General Humbert's 1,000 Frenchmen the year after, performed the "rares of Castlebar" with his army of several thousand house-burning, woman-outraging, and man-torturing braves.

But the excesses of the Government produced a reaction in the Protestant County of Armagh. At a large meeting convened by the High Sheriff an address to the King was carried. "It declared that the British Constitution in Ireland was enjoyed only in name; that a system of organised corruption had been established which made the Irish Parliament a mere instrument in the hands of the English Cabinet; that the people were being goaded to madness by accumulated oppressions; that in the richest and most prosperous province of Ireland military coercion had taken the place of common law, and useful citizens were dragged to the fleet without trial by jury, like the most atrocious felons." They added, "that the restrictions still maintained upon the Catholics were disgraceful to the age, and that the Government had been deliberately propagating religious animosities and persecutions." Addresses of a similar character were forwarded from the great Protestant County Antrim, King's County, Kildare, Dublin, Cork, the Whig Club, and the Bar. But as Lecky tells us, "it appears very probable that the intention of the Government to carry an union was one of their leading motives," so remonstrances even from the royalists were of no avail.



The brother of the Bishop of Ossary wrote—"Were I to enumerate the robberies, murders, and shameful outrages committed upon Catholics of this place by those Orange Boys, headed by officers in full yeomanry uniform, it would be an endless business."

In winding up an argument, Lecky, at page 117, says:—"But although all this may be truly said, the faults of the Irish Government during the few years before the rebellion of 1798 appears to me to have been enormously great, and a weight of tremendous responsibility rests upon those who conducted it. By habitual corruption, and the steady employment of the system of nomination boroughs, they had reduced the Irish Legislature to a condition of such despicable subserviency that a policy which was probably supported by the great majority of educated Irishmen (and all the uneducated) could not command more than 20 or 30 votes in the House of Commons."

Lecky (page 323, vol. 3) shows how, by the recall of Fitzwilliam, great classes hitherto very slightly disaffected passed rapidly into Republicanism, and Catholic opinion, which had been raised to the highest point of excited hope, experienced a complete and dangerous revulsion. The recall of Fitzwilliam may be justly regarded as a fatal turning point in Irish history. For 15 years the country had been steadily improving. Religious animosities appeared to have died away. Material prosperity was advancing with an unprecedented rapidity. With the removal of the few remaining religious disabilities, a settlement of tithes, and a moderate reform of Parliament, it seemed probable Ireland, under the guidance of her resident gentry, might have contributed at least as much as Scotland to the prosperity of the Empire. But from the day when Pitt recalled Lord Fitzwilliam, the course of her history was changed. Intense and growing hatred of England revived religious and class animosities. A savage rebellion savagely suppressed, a legislative union prematurely and corruptly carried, mark the closing years of the 18th century, and after 90 years of direct British Government, the condition of Ireland is universally recognised as the chief scandal and chief weakness of the Empire.

Mr. Lecky certainly does his best to extenuate the crimes of England in her Irish Government, but no writer of Irish history has more fearlessly stated

the facts, and Irish Nationalists owe him much. But the above passage, to my mind, justifies the attempt of Ireland, by arms, to win what she had lost by corruption and fraud. If her Parliament could no longer carry out the wishes of the people, if it was so completely under the control of the Cabinet of another nation, as Mr. Lecky tells us, notwithstanding the constitution of 1782, which the English King and Government were sworn to support, then one only course lay before the people who loved Ireland and were loyal to the constitution of '82—the appeal to the God of Battles. It was made. Ireland lost, but the end is not yet.

The brave Sir Ralph Abercromby, the hero of Egypt, refused to retain the command of the army when he discovered the state of the country and the devil's work he was expected to carry out. He wrote, "Within these twelve months every crime, every cruelty that could be committed by Cossacks or Calmucks has been transacted here. The late ridiculous farce enacted by Lord Camden and his Cabinet must strike every one. They have declared the Kingdom in rebellion when the orders of his Excellency might be carried over the whole Kingdom by an orderly dragoon, or a writ executed without any difficulty, except in a few places on the mountains."

More is unnecessary. I have told the salient points of the sad story of Ireland from the Boyne to Ballinahinch, 1689 to 1789. I have relied much for proofs upon the distinguished Irish historian who represents the Conservative University of Dublin in Parliament, and who is there to oppose Home Rule. The events of '98 will now be told in detail by an Irish Patriot of the Kossuth type, stern and unbending to the end. What might have been had John Mitchel lived to feel the wondrous power of Gladstone's brave confession of his country's crimes and Britain's great attempt to make atonement? He might, like other supposed irreconcilables, have felt that "touch of Nature that makes the world kin," and become a Reformer instead of a Revolutionist. But his country's wrongs had made him in youth the Wolfe Tone of young Ireland; his imprisonment and twenty-five years' exile had deepened his hatred to his country's destroyers; so his Irish history, whilst written with care and sustained by authorities that defy criticism, in all important points is filled with fierce



sarcasm and smites like a two-edged sword. When I looked into his noble face as he lay in death, marked his sad stern features, and thought of his heroic life, Kingsley's words came into my mind, "God only makes one such man as this at a time."

Mr. Mitchel says:—"The report of Earl Fitzwilliam's intended removal was no sooner credited, than an universal despondency, in some instances bordering on desperation, seized the whole nation. Meetings were formed throughout the kingdom, in order to convey to their beloved and respected Governor, their high sense of his virtue and patriotism, and their just indignation at his and their country's enemies. The deep and settled spirit of discontent which at this time pervaded all ranks of people was not confined to the Catholics. The Dissenters and as many of the Protestants of the establishment as had not an interest in that monopoly of power and influence which Earl Fitzwilliam had so openly attacked and so fearfully alarmed, felt the irresistible effect: all good Irishmen beheld with sorrow and indignation, the reconciliation of all parties, interests, and religions defeated, the cup of national union dashed from their eager lips, and the spirit of discord let loose upon the kingdom with an enlarged commission to inflame, aggravate and destroy. Such were the feelings, and such the language of those who deplored the removal of that nobleman, in the critical moment of giving peace, strength, and prosperity to their country. And how large a part of the Irish nation lamented the loss of their truly patriotic Governor may be read in the numberless addresses and resolutions that poured in upon him both before and after his actual departure, expressive of their grief, despair, and indignation at that ominous event. They came from every description of persons, but from Right Boys, Defenders, and the old dependants upon the castle. The people of Ireland, of all sects and classes, seemed seized with a sudden undefined horror at the prospects before them. They saw that a great opportunity was lost. And they had no mortal quarrel with one another, save the quarrel always made for them, always forced upon them, by an English minister sitting safe in his Cabinet at Westminster. Many on both sides who were destined soon to meet in deadly struggle could have prayed that this cup might pass. On the 25th of March, 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam took his departure from Ireland, when the resentment,

grief, and indignation of the public were most strongly marked. It was a day of general gloom; the shops were shut; no business of any kind was transacted, and the whole city put on mourning. His coach was drawn to the water side by some of the most respectable citizens, and cordial sorrow appeared on every countenance. The reception of Earl Camden, who arrived in Dublin five days after, wore a very different complexion; displeasure appeared generally: many strong traits of disapprobation were exhibited, and some of the populace were so outrageous that it became necessary to call out a military force in order to quell the disturbances that ensued.

"Still the rage for meetings and addresses continued. On the 9th of April a most numerous and respectable meeting of the Catholics was held in their chapel in Francis Street, to receive the report of their delegates, who had presented the petition at St. James': when Mr. Keogh reported, that in execution of their mission, they had on the 13th March presented their petition to His Majesty, and had received what was generally termed a gracious reception. That they had afterwards felt it their duty to request an audience with the Duke of Portland, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to receive such information as he should think fit to impart relative to His Majesty's determination on the subject of their address. That his grace declined giving any information whatever, save that His Majesty had imparted his pleasure thereon to the Lord-Lieutenant, and that he was the proper channel through which that information should pass. Here their mission was determined. Mr. Keogh continued to deliver his sentiments upon the critical situation of affairs, and amongst many strong things which fell from him, one observation gave particular offence to Government. He was not, he said, sorry that the measure had been attempted, though it had been defeated; for it pointed out one fact at least, in which the feelings of every Irishman were interested, and by which the Irish Legislature would be roused to a sense of its own dignity. It showed that the internal regulations of Ireland, to which alone an Irish Parliament was competent, were to be previously adjusted by a British Cabinet. Whilst this debate was going on, a very large party of the young men of the college came into the chapel, and were most honourably received. Some



of them joined in the debate. They came that hour from presenting an address to Mr. Grattan, to thank and congratulate him upon his patriotic efforts in the cause of Catholic Emancipation, and the reform of those abuses which had inflamed public indignation, to which Mr. Grattan made an appropriate answer. Every patriotic Irishman must look back with unavailing regret to the lost opportunity, or rather to the cruel deception, of Lord Fitzwilliam's short administration. There was really at that moment a disposition to bury the hatchet of strife. At no subsequent period, down to this day, were the two nations which make up the Irish population, so well disposed to amalgamate and unite. But that did not suit the exigencies of British policy. There was to be an insurrection, in order that there might be a Legislative Union. In this same eventful year of 1795, British policy was materially aided by a new and portentous institution—the *Orange Society*. The recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the absolute and most inevitable despair of obtaining either Reform of Parliament or Catholic Emancipation under the existing order of things, had driven vast numbers of the people, of both religions, into the United Irish Society. A spirit of union and fraternity was spreading fast. 'Then,' says Mr. Plowden, 'the gentlemen in place became frightfully alarmed for their situations; active agents were sent down to Armagh, to turn the ferocity and fanaticism of *Peep of Day Boys* into a religious contest with the Catholics, under the specious appearance of zeal for Church and King. Personal animosity was artfully converted into religious rancour; and for the specious purpose of taking off the stigma of delinquency, the appellation of *Peep of Day Boys* was changed into that of *Orangemen*.' It was in the northern part of Armagh County that this bloody

association originated, and Mr. Thomas Verner enjoyed the bad eminence of being its first 'Grand Master.' Their test is said to have been: 'In the awful presence of Almighty God, I, A. B., do solemnly swear, that I will, to the utmost of my power, support the King and the present Government; and I do further swear, that I will use my utmost exertions to exterminate all the Catholics of the kingdom of Ireland.' But this oath, being secret, has latterly been denied by the Orangemen of respectability and consequence. It has been generally credited that it was taken by all the original lodges, and continued afterwards to be taken by the lower classes. The Orange oath is given in the above terms in a pamphlet published in 1797, called '*A View of the present state of Ireland*,' which is attributed to Arthur O'Connor. But whatever may have been the original form of engagement, or however it may have since been changed by more politic 'Grand Masters,' nothing is more certain than that the Orange Society did immediately and most seriously apply themselves to the task of exterminating the Catholics. There is quite as little doubt that this shocking society was encouraged by the Government, and by most of the magistrates and country gentlemen to keep alive religious animosity, and prevent the spread of the United Irish organization. An union of Irishmen upon the just, liberal, and fraternal basis of this organization, would have rendered impossible that other 'Union' on which Mr. Pitt had set his heart—the Union of Ireland with England. The recall of Lord Camden gave the signal for the bloody anarchy, through which Ireland was doomed to pass for the next four years, and which, it was deliberately calculated, was to end in her extinction as a nation."



## CHAPTER I.

1795—1797.

"To Hell or Connaught."—"Vigour beyond the Law."—Lord Carhampton's Vigour.—Insurrection Act.—Indemnity Act.—The latter an invitation to Magistrates to break the law.—Mr. Grattan on the Orangemen.—His Resolution.—The Acts Passed.—Opposed by Grattan, Parsons, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald.—Insurrection Act destroys Liberty of the Press.—Suspension of Habeas Corpus.—U. I. Society.—New Members.—Lord E. Fitzgerald.—MacNeven.—Emmet.—Wolfe Tone at Paris.—His Journal.—Clarke.—Carnot.—Hoche.—Bantry Bay Expedition.—Account of, in Tone's Journal.—Fleet Anchors in Bantry Bay.—Account of the affair by Secret Committee of the Lords.—Government fully Informed of all the Projects.

THE chief object of the Government and its agents was now to invent and disseminate fearful rumours of intended massacres of all the Protestant people by the Catholics. Dr. Madden says: "Efforts were made to infuse into the mind of the Protestant feelings of distrust to his Catholic fellow-countrymen. Popish plots and conspiracies were fabricated with a practical facility, which some influential authorities conceived it no degradation to stoop to; and alarming reports of these dark confederations were circulated with a restless assiduity." The effects were soon apparent in the atrocities committed by the Orangemen in Armagh, and by the magistrates and military in other counties. The persecuted "Defenders" of Armagh made some feeble attempts to protect themselves, though almost without arms. This resistance led to the transaction called "Battle of the Diamond," near the village of that name, on the 21st of September, 1795. Several writers have alleged that the Catholics invited this conflict by a challenge sent to the Orangemen. Of course, the latter, having abundance of arms, and being sure of the protection of the magistrates, were not slow to accept such an invitation; but nothing can be more absurd than to term the affair a battle. Not one of the Orange party was killed or wounded. Four or five Defenders were killed, and a proportionate number wounded; and this is the glorious battle that has been toasted at Orange banquets from that day to the present. Mr. Emmet\* thus describes the transaction: "The Defenders were speedily defeated with the loss of some few killed and left on the field of battle, besides the wounded, whom they carried away. \* \* \* The Catholics, after this, never attempted to make a stand,

\* Pieces of Irish History.

but the Orangemen commenced a persecution of the blackest dye. They would no longer permit a Catholic to exist in the county. They posted up on the cabins of these unfortunate victims this pithy notice, 'To Hell or Connaught;' and appointed a limited time in which the necessary removal of persons and property was to be made.—If, after the expiration of that period, the notice had not been complied with, the Orangemen assembled, destroyed the furniture, burned the habitations, and forced the ruined families to fly elsewhere for shelter." Mr. Emmet adds, "While these outrages were going on, the resident magistrates were not found to resist them, and in some instances were even more than inactive spectators." Dr. Madden has preserved and printed a number of the "notices," ill-spelled, but sufficiently intelligible, which were posted on the cabin doors. But the Orangemen by no means confined themselves to mere forcible ejection of their enemies. Many fearful murders were committed on the unresisting people; and what gives perhaps the clearest idea of the persecution is the fact that *seven thousand* persons were estimated in the next year to have been either killed or driven from their homes in that one small county alone.\* But the unhappy outcasts, even when they escaped with their lives, had no shelter to fly to. In most cases they could only wander on the mountains until either death relieved them, or they were arrested and imprisoned; while the younger men were sent, without ceremony, to one of the "tenders," then lying in various sea-ports, and thence transferred on board British men-of-war. This was the device originally of Lord Carhampton, then commanding in Ireland. It was called a "vigour beyond the law"—a delicate phrase which has since come very much into use to describe outrages committed by magistrates *against* the law. During all the rest of this year the greater part of Leinster, with portions of Ulster and Munster, were in the utmost terror and agony; the Orange magistrates, aided by the troops, arresting and imprisoning, without any charge, multitudes of unoffending people, under one pretext or another. It is right to present a sample of the story as told by "loyal men." Thus, then, the matter is represented by Sir Richard Musgrave, p. 145: "Lord Car-

\* Mr. Plowden, who is as hostile to the Defenders as any Orangeman, says from five to seven thousand. O'Connor, Emmet, and MacNeven, in their Memoirs of the Union, say, "seven thousand driven from their homes."



hampton, finding that the laws were silent and inoperative in the counties which he visited, and that they did not afford protection to the loyal and peaceable subjects, *who in most places were obliged to fly from their habitations*, resolved to restore them to their usual energy, by the following salutary system of severity: 'In each county he assembled the most respectable gentlemen and landholders in it, and having, in concert with them, examined the charges against the leaders of this banditti who were in prison, but defied justice, he, with the concurrence of these gentlemen, sent the most nefarious of them on board a tender stationed at Sligo, to serve in His Majesty's navy.' There is no doubt that great numbers of people were obliged to fly from their habitations; but then these were the very people whom Lord Carhampton and the magistrates called banditti, and sent to the tender as "nefarious." Such is, however, a specimen of the history of these times as told upon Orange authority.

In the midst of these painful scenes, Parliament assembled on the 21st of January, 1796. Lord Camden, in his speech from the throne, congratulated them on "the brilliant successes of the Austrian armies upon the Rhine;" and then, alluding to dangerous secret societies, he intimated that certain additional powers would be called for; in other words, martial law. The Attorney-General lost no time in bringing forward an Insurrection Act and an Indemnity Act—the latter being for the purpose of indemnifying magistrates and military officers against the consequences of any of their illegal outrages upon the people.

Mr. Curran wished to know the extent and nature of that delinquency which it was intended to indemnify; when Mr. M. Beresford observed, the word *delinquency* was not applicable to the persons intended; a part of the country was alarmingly disturbed; the magistrates and others invested with power had, in order to prevent the necessity of proclaiming martial law universally, acted in that particular district as if martial law were proclaimed: this conduct, so far from being delinquency, was justifiable and laudable, and of happy consequence in the event.

On the 28th of the month, the Attorney-General adverted to the notice he had given on the first night of the session, of his intention of bringing in two bills: the object of one of them was for preventing in future insurrections, and tumults, and riots in this kingdom; and the object of the other bill was to indemnify certain

magistrates and others, who, in their exertions for the preservation of the public tranquillity, might have acted *against the forms and rules of law*; he stated that the bill for the more effectually preventing of insurrections, tumults, and riots, by persons styling themselves Defenders, and other disorderly persons, was, however, repugnant to his feelings.

He said that the act then in force for administering unlawful oaths was not sufficiently strong, and the administering of unlawful oaths was the source of all the treasonable actions which had taken place in the country: the bill proposed that the administering of unlawful oaths should be felony of death; but he would propose that that bill should be but a temporary law; there was also a clause in the bill to enable the magistrates, at the quarter sessions, to take up all idle vagrants and persons who had no visible means of earning a livelihood, and send them to serve on board the fleet; he said he did not propose to hurry this bill through the House, but give time for the consideration, as it might be necessary to add much, and make several alterations. He then moved for leave "to bring in a bill for the more effectual prevention of insurrections, tumults, and riots, by persons styling themselves Defenders, and other disorderly persons;" and leave was given to bring in the bill. Then he moved for leave "to bring in a bill for indemnifying such magistrates and others who might have, since the 1st of January, 1795, exceeded the ordinary forms and rules of law for the preservation of the public peace, and suppression of insurrection prevailing in some parts of this kingdom."

There was earnest opposition against these two bills, but without effect: they were both passed into laws; and they had the effect, which they were certainly intended to have, of exciting, or at least hastening, the insurrection of 1798. It is observable that the motive assigned by the Government officials for passing these laws was always the outrages and alleged secret associations of *Defenders*. Not a word was said about the real outrages and exterminating oaths of Orangemen. Indeed, the measures in question were really directed not against either Defenders or Orangemen, but against the United Irishmen, the only association of which the Government had the slightest fear. Besides the two bills the Attorney-General proposed four supplemental resolutions asserting the necessity of giving enlarged powers to magistrates to search for arms and to make arrests. On the reading of



these resolutions, Mr. Grattan observed, that he had heard the right honourable gentleman's statement, and did not suppose it to be inflamed; but he must observe at the same time it was partial; he did, indeed, expatiate very fully and justly on the offences of the Defenders; but with respect to another description of insurgents, whose barbarities had excited general abhorrence, he had observed a complete silence; that he had proceeded to enumerate the counties that were afflicted by disturbances, and he had omitted Armagh;—of that, neither had he comprehended the outrages in his general description, nor in his particular enumeration; of those outrages he had received the most dreadful accounts; that their object was the extermination of all the Catholics of that county; it was a persecution conceived in the bitterness of bigotry, carried on with the most ferocious barbarity, by a banditti, who being of the religion of the state, had committed with the greater audacity and confidence, the most horrid murders, and had proceeded from robbery and massacre to extermination; that they had repealed, by their own authority, all the laws lately passed in favour of the Catholics, had established in the place of those laws the inquisition of a mob, resembling Lord George Gordon's fanatics, equalling them in outrage, and surpassing them far in perseverance and success.

That their modes of outrage were as various as they were atrocious; they sometimes forced, by terror, the masters of families to dismiss their Catholic servants; they sometimes forced landlords, by terror, to dismiss their Catholic tenantry; they seized as deserters, numbers of Catholic weavers—sent them to the county jail, transmitted them to Dublin, where they remained in close prison, until some lawyers, from compassion, pleaded their cause, and procured their enlargement, nothing appearing against them of any kind whatsoever. Those insurgents who called themselves Orange Boys, or Protestant Boys, that is, a banditti of murderers, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic power in the name of liberty—those insurgents had organized their rebellion, and had formed themselves into a committee, who sat and tried the Catholic weavers and inhabitants, when apprehended falsely and illegally as deserters. That rebellious committee they called the committee of elders, who, when the unfortunate Catholic was torn from his family and his loom, and brought before them in judgment upon his case—if he

gave them liquor or money, they sometimes discharged him—otherwise they sent him to a recruiting officer as a deserter. They had very generally given the Catholics notice to quit their farms and dwellings, which notice was plastered on the house, and conceived in these short but plain words: "Go to Hell, Connaught won't receive you—fire and faggot. Will Tresham and John Thrustout." That they followed these notices by a faithful and punctual execution of the horrid threat—soon after visited the house, robbed the family, and destroyed what they did not take, and finally completed the atrocious persecutions by forcing the unfortunate inhabitants to leave their land, their dwellings, and their trade, and to travel with their miserable family, and with whatever their miserable family could save from the wreck of their houses and tenements, and take refuge in villages, as fortifications against invaders, where they described themselves, as he had seen in their affidavits, in the following manner: "We (mentioning their names), formerly of Armagh, weavers, now of no fixed place of abode or means of living, &c." In many instances this banditti of persecution threw down the houses of the tenantry, or what they called racked the house, so that the family must fly or be buried in the grave of their own cabin. The extent of the murders that had been committed by that atrocious and rebellious banditti he had heard, but had not heard them so ascertained as to state them to that house; but from all the inquiries he could make he collected that the Catholic inhabitants of Armagh had been actually put out of the protection of the law; that the magistrates had been supine or partial, and that the horrid banditti had met with complete success and, from the magistracy, with very little discouragement. This horrid persecution, this abominable barbarity, and this general extermination had been acknowledged by the magistrates, who found the evil had now proceeded to so shameful an excess, that it had at length obliged them to cry out against it. On the 28th of December, thirty of the magistrates had come to the following resolution, which was evidence of the designs of the insurgents, and of their success: "*Resolved*, That it appears to this meeting, that the County of Armagh is at this moment in a state of uncommon disorder; that the Roman Catholic inhabitants are grievously oppressed by lawless persons unknown, who attack and plunder their houses by night, and threaten them with instant destruc-



tion, unless they abandon immediately their lands and habitations."

The "Insurrection Act" was intended to give magistrates most unlimited powers to arrest and imprison, and search houses for arms; the other act, called of "Indemnity," was an actual invitation to break the law. Mr. Grattan, whose speeches, more than any records or documents, illustrate this period of the history of his country, commenting on this latter act, says: "A bill of indemnity went to secure the offending magistrates against the consequences of their outrages and illegalities; that is to say, in our humble conception, the poor were stricken out of the protection of the law, and the rich out of its penalties; and then another bill was passed to give such lawless proceedings against His Majesty's subjects continuation, namely, a bill to enable the magistrates to perpetrate by law those offences which they had before committed against it; a bill to legalize outrage, to barbarize law, and to give the law itself the cast and colour of outrage. By such a bill, the magistrates were enabled, without legal process, to send on board a tender His Majesty's subjects, and the country was divided into two classes, or formed into two distinct nations, living under the same King, and inhabiting the same island; one consisting of the King's magistrates, and the other of the King's subjects; the former without restraint, and the latter without privilege."

Both the bills passed; but amongst those who opposed them to the last in the House of Commons, by the side of Mr. Grattan and Sir Lawrence Parsons, it is with pleasure that one finds the honoured name of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The debates on these bills and resolutions furnish perhaps the most authentic documents for the history of the time, and especially for the lawless outrages which were then devastating the north of Ireland. One of the Attorney-General's resolutions spoke of the necessity of punishing persons who "seized by force the arms of His Majesty's subjects." Mr. Grattan moved an amendment, to add "and also the persons of His Majesty's subjects, and to force them to abandon their lands and habitations;" and in the third resolution, after the words "murdering those who had spirit to give information," to add, "also attempting to seize the persons, and obliging His Majesty's subjects, by force, to abandon their lands and habitations."

But the amendment, as it evidently contemplated the protection of the unhappy Catholics of Armagh County, was

opposed by the Attorney-General, and rejected as a matter of course."

One of the clauses of the "Insurrection Act" was vehemently, but vainly, opposed by Sir Lawrence Parsons: it was to empower any two magistrates to seize upon persons who should publish or sell a newspaper or pamphlet which they, the two magistrates should deem seditious, and without any form or trial to send them on board the fleet. This was a total annihilation of the Press, saving only the Castle Press.

When it is recollected that the magistracy and Protestant country gentlemen of Ireland were at that time inflamed with the most furious rage against their Catholic countrymen, and were besides purposely excited by rumours of intended Popish risings for the extirpation of Protestants (which many of them in their ignorance believed), it will be seen what a terrible power these acts conferred upon them. They naturally conceived, and very justly, that the law now made it a merit on their part to *break* the law, provided it were done to the oppression and ruin of the Catholic people; and felt that they were turned loose with a full commission to burn, slay, rob, and ravish. It will be seen that they largely availed themselves of these privileges. There was but one thing now wanted; and this was the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act. This was supplied in the next session of Parliament, which took place on the 13th of October; and from that moment Ireland stood utterly stripped naked of all law and government.

In the meantime the United Irish Society had been steadily increasing and busily labouring and negotiating. Some valuable members had lately joined it, in despair of any peaceable or constitutional remedy. The chief of these was the generous and gallant Lord Edward Fitzgerald, brother to the then Duke of Leinster, formerly a major in the British army, and who had served under Cornwallis against the Americans. Since his return to Europe he had several times visited the Continent, and mingled much with revolutionary society in France. Having seen so much of the world, he was not so ignorant and stupid as were most of the Irish gentry at that period; and his natural nobility of soul was revolted by the brutal usage to which he saw his countrymen subjected at the hands of the "Ascendancy." It is probable, too, that he, the descendant of an ancient Gallo-Hibernian house, settled in Ireland more than six centuries, which had given chiefs to the ancient Clan-



Geralt, and had been called "more Irish than the Irish," had far more sympathy with the Irish race than the mob of Cromwellian and Williamite grandees who then ruled the country. Arthur O'Connor was another valuable accession to the ranks of the United Irishmen. He was also highly connected, though by no means equally so with Lord Edward; but he was nephew of Lord Longueville, had sat in Parliament for Philipstown, and had laboured zealously for a time on the forlorn hope of the opposition, by the side of Grattan and Curran. Another was Thomas Addis Emmet, a barrister, a warm friend of Wolfe Tone, who had been long intimately associated in principle with the leaders of the United Irish Association, and had been privy to the design of Tone, to negotiate a French alliance; a fourth was Dr. William James MacNeven, a physician in Dublin, originally of Galway County, but who had been educated on the Continent, as most of the young professional men among the Catholics then were. These four became members of the "Executive Directory" of the United Irish Society; and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, when its military organization was formed, was made Commander-in-Chief. It was after the passage of the Insurrection and Indemnity acts, and in the recess between the two sessions of Parliament of 1796, that the United Irishmen began to make definitive preparations for armed resistance.\*

Theobald Wolfe Tone was now in Paris, having arrived at Havre the 1st of February, 1796, bearing a letter of introduction to Charles De la Croix, Minister for Foreign Affairs, from the French Envoy at Philadelphia. He had another letter to James Monroe, then the representative of the United States in Paris, who very kindly guided him in his proceedings to gain the ear of the French authorities. He had several interviews with de la Croix, with Clarke (who was afterwards Duc de Feltre), and, what was of more importance, with the illustrious Carnot, Chief of the Executive Directory, who really himself controlled at that moment the movements of all the French armies. The journal kept by Tone during the remainder of that year, is at times very entertaining, and again extremely affecting—especially where he records the few pieces of intelligence which reached him from Ireland in those days of in-

terrupted communications. For example, one day at Rennes, he writes: "*October 29th.*—This morning before we set out. General Harty sent for me, and showed me an English paper that he had just borrowed, the *Morning Post*, of September 24th, in which was an article copied from the *Northern Star* of the 16th precedent. By this unfortunate article, I see that what I have long expected, with the greatest anxiety, is come to pass. My dear friends, Russell and Sam. Neilson, were arrested for high treason on that day, together with Rowley Osborne, Haslett, and a person whom I do not know, of the name of Shanaghan. The persons who arrested them were the Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Westmeath, and Lord Londonderry, together, with that most infamous of all scoundrels, John Pollock. It is impossible to conceive the effect this heavy misfortune has upon my mind. If we are not in Ireland in time enough to extricate them, they are gone; for the Government will move heaven, earth, and hell, to insure their condemnation. Good God! If they fall—"

His progress in negotiating for substantial aid from France had at first been slow, and sometimes looked discouraging. He was required to draw up two "memorials" upon the state and resources of Ireland, for the Government; and in these memorials, and in the conversations which he records with Clarke and Carnot, it is chiefly important to remark, that he always pressed urgently for a large force, such as would enable the chiefs of the United Irishmen at once to establish a Provisional Government and prevent anarchy; that he strenuously opposed a recommendation of Clarke, for exciting both in England and Ireland a species of *chouannerie*, or mere peasant insurrection, with no other object than to create confusion, and operate as a diversion. Tone admitted that it might be natural and justifiable for the French to retaliate in this way what the English had done to them in La Vendee; but his own object was the independence of his country, which, he rightly thought, would not be served by mere riot and confusion. We find also in these notes that Clarke and Carnot several times questioned him about the dispositions of the Catholic clergy, and how they might be expected to act in case of a landing. He always replied that no reliance could be placed upon the clergy at first, especially if the expedition were not in sufficient force to put down quickly all resistance; that they were opposed to republicanism and revolution, but if the French went in sufficient force

\* See examination of Arthur O'Connor before the Secret Committee of the House of Lords: Com.—When did the military organization begin? O'Connor—Shortly after the Executive had resolved on resistance to the Irish Government, and on an alliance with France in May, 1796.



the clergy neither would nor could give serious opposition to the liberation of his country.

While Tone was labouring through these summer months to get those ministers impressed with his own ideas, and wondering at their hesitation, when it was in their power to deal a mortal blow upon English power, another negotiation was going on, which at the time was unknown to him. It is stated in the Report of the Lords' Secret Committee, hereafter to be cited, that the agent of the United Irishmen in this second negotiation was Edward John Lewins, an attorney in Dublin; but this is probably an error. At all events, it is certain that the French Directory was at that moment in correspondence with the Irish chiefs through other channels than Wolfe Tone; and that Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor had come to Switzerland by way of Hamburg to meet agents of the Directory; and General Hoche had repaired to Basle, just over the French frontier, to confer with those gentlemen. In deciding upon so vast an armament, the Ministers of the French Republic were certainly justified in procuring all possible authentic information about Ireland; and in checking the memorials of Tone by the reports of other well-known leaders of the United Irishmen. They had incautiously opened their negotiations with the Directory through the medium of M. Barthelemi, of whose integrity they had no suspicion; and Dr. Madden informs us that by this error "they at once placed the secret of their mission in the sympathizing bosom of Mr. William Pitt."\* The Secret Committee of the Lords, indeed, in 1798, details the negotiation with perfect correctness, and hints at the means by which the expedition was frustrated. However that may be, it is evident that the reports of Lord E. Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor respecting their friend Wolf Tone were in all respects satisfactory. The next time he was in the Cabinet of General Clarke, on his expressing a wish to be enabled to write to his friends, to tell them he was alive and well at Paris, Clarke, says the journal, answered, "'As to that, your friends know it already.' I replied, 'Not that I know of.' He answered, 'Aye, but I know it, but cannot tell you at present how.' He then went on to tell me he did not know how to explain himself further, 'for,' added he, 'if I tell you ever so little, you will guess the rest.' So it seems I am a cunning fox without knowing it. He gave me, however, to

understand that he had a communication open with Ireland, and showed me a paper, asking me did I know the handwriting. I did not. He then read a good deal. It stated very briefly, that fourteen of the counties, including the entire North, were completely organised for the purpose of throwing off the English yoke and establishing our independence; that, in the remaining eighteen, the organization was advancing rapidly, and that it was so arranged that the inferiors obeyed their leaders, without examining their orders, or even knowing who they were, and every one knew only the person immediately above him. That the militia were about 20,000 men, 17,000 of whom might be relied on, that there were about 12,000 regular troops, wretched bad ones, who would soon be settled in case the business were attempted. Clarke was going on, but stopped here suddenly, and said, laughing, 'There is something there which I cannot read to you, or you will guess.' I begged him to use his discretion without ceremony. He then asked me, did I know of this organisation? I replied that I could not, with truth, say positively I knew it, but that I had no manner of doubt of it: that it was now twelve months exactly since I left Ireland, in which time, I was satisfied, much must have been done in that country, and that he would find in my memorials that such an organisation was then begun, was rapidly spreading, and, I had no doubt, would soon embrace the whole people. It is curious, the coincidence between the paper he read me and those I have given here, though, upon second thoughts, as truth is uniform, it would be still more extraordinary if they should vary. I am delighted beyond measure with the progress which has been made in Ireland since my banishment. I see they are advancing rapidly and safely, and personally nothing can be more agreeable to me than this coincidence between what I have said and written, and the accounts which I see they receive here. The paper also stated, as I have done, that we wanted arms, ammunition, and artillery; in short, it was as exact in all particulars as if the same person had written all. This ascertains my credit in France beyond a doubt. Clarke then said, as to my business, he was only waiting for letters from General Hoche, in order to settle it finally; that I should have a regiment of cavalry, and it was probable it might be fixed that day; that the arrangement of the forces intended for the expedition was entrusted to Hoche, by which I see we shall go from

\* Madden's United Irishmen, 2d series, p. 390.



Brittany instead of Holland. All's one for that, provided we go at all."

A few days after this, and just when poor Tone was almost in his last straits for money, he was sent for to the Luxembourg Palace, and there, in the Cabinet of M. Fleury, a very handsome young man came up to him very warmly, seemed to have known him all his life, and introduced himself as General Hoche—the most rising man at that moment among the young military chiefs of the republic. It was he who had had the honour of defending Dunkirk successfully against the English, and afterwards of defeating utterly the Vendean force, equipped and armed by the same English, and landed at Quiberon under the guns of Admiral Warren's fleet. In short, it was against the English he had done most of his service, and he coveted the privilege of commanding the formidable expedition which was now fully resolved on for the liberation of Ireland. He informed Tone that the latter was to be attached to his personal staff, with the grade of *Chef de Brigade*. At last, then, the grand object of Wolfe Tone's life and labours seemed on the point of being attained. He was delighted with Hoche, who quite agreed with him in his views of the scale on which the expedition should be made, and of the necessity of proceeding by the laws of regular warfare, not of *chouannerie*. For the due comprehension of the true intent and aims of this celebrated expedition we may here give a passage from Tone's record of his conference with its chief:—

"He asked me in case of a landing being effectuated, might he rely on finding provisions, and particularly bread? I said it would be impossible to make any arrangements in Ireland, previous to the landing, because of the *surveillance* of the Government, but if that were once accomplished, there would be no want of provisions; that Ireland abounded in cattle, and, as for bread, I saw by the *Gazette* that there was not only no deficiency of corn, but that she was able to supply England, in a great degree, during the late alarming scarcity in that country, and I assured him, that if the French were once landed in Ireland, he might rely that, whoever wanted bread, they should not want it. He seemed satisfied with this, and proceeded to ask me, might we count upon being able to form a Provisionary Government, either of the Catholic Committee, mentioned in my memorials, or of the chiefs of the Defenders? I thought I saw an open here to come at the number of troops intended for us, and

replied that that would depend on the force which might be landed; if that force were but trifling, I could not pretend to say how they might act, but if it was considerable, I had no doubt of their co-operation. 'Undoubtedly,' replied he, 'men will not sacrifice themselves when they do not see a reasonable prospect of support; but if I go, you may be sure I will go in sufficient force.' He then asked, did I think ten thousand men would decide them? I answered, undoubtedly, but that early in the business the Minister had spoken to me of two thousand, and that I had replied that such a number could effect nothing. No, replied he, they would be overwhelmed before any one could join them. I replied, I was glad to hear him give that opinion, as it was precisely what I had stated to the Minister, and I repeated that, with the force he mentioned, I could have no doubt of support and co-operation sufficient to form a Provisionary Government. He then asked me what I thought of the priests, or was it likely they would give us any trouble? I replied I certainly did not calculate on their assistance, but neither did I think they would be able to give us any effectual opposition; that their influence over the minds of the common people was exceedingly diminished of late, and I instanced the case of the Defenders, so often mentioned in my memorials, and in these memorandums. I explained all this at some length to him, and concluded by saying, that in prudence we should avoid as much as possible shocking their prejudices unnecessarily, and that, with common discretion, I thought we might secure their neutrality at least, if not their support. I mentioned this merely as my opinion, but added that, in the contrary event, I was satisfied it would be absolutely impossible for them to take the people out of our hands. We then came to the army. He asked me how I thought they would act? I replied, for the regulars I could not pretend to say, but that they were wretched bad troops; for the militia, I hoped and believed that when we were once organized, they would not only not oppose us, but come over to the cause of their country *en masse*; nevertheless, I desired him to calculate on their opposition, and make his arrangements accordingly; that it was the safe policy, and if it became necessary, it was so much gained. He said he would, undoubtedly, make his arrangements so as to leave nothing to chance that could be guarded against; that he would come in force, and bring great quantities of arms, ammunition, stores, and artillery,



and, for his own reputation, see that all the arrangements were made on a proper scale. I was very glad to hear him speak thus; it sets my mind at ease on diverse points. He then said there was one important point remaining, on which he desired to be satisfied, and that was what form of Government we would adopt on the event of our success. I was going to answer him with great earnestness, when General Clarke entered, to request we would come to dinner with citizen Carnot. We, accordingly, adjourned the conversation to the apartment of the President, where we found Carnot, and one or two more. Hoche, after some time, took me aside and repeated his question. I replied, 'Most undoubtedly, a republic.' He asked again, 'Was I sure?' I said, as sure as I could be of anything; that I knew nobody in Ireland who thought of any other system, nor did I believe there was anybody who dreamt of monarchy. He asked me was there no danger of the Catholics setting up one of their chiefs for king? I replied, 'Not the smallest,' and that there were no chiefs amongst them of that kind of eminence. This is the old business again, but I believe I satisfied Hoche; it looks well to see him so anxious on that topic, on which he pressed me more than on all the others."

From this time preparations were pushed forward with more or less activity; but by no means fast enough to satisfy the ardent spirit of Tone. The rendezvous for the troops was appointed at Rennes, the old capital of Bretagne; while the fleet, consisting of ships of war and transports, was getting ready at Brest. During the several months which intervened, as news occasionally came in from Ireland, telling of the systematic outrages on the country people, and new arrests and measures of "vigour beyond the law," his anxiety and impatience redoubled. On the 28th of July he writes: "I see the Orange Boys are playing the devil in Ireland. *I have no doubt it is the work of the Government.* Please God, if I get safe into that country, I will settle those gentlemen, and their instigators also more especially." Again, late in August, he writes:—

"The news, at least the report of to-day, is, that Richery and the Spaniards are before Lisbon, and that a French army is in full march across Spain, in order to enter Portugal; that would be a blow to Master John Bull fifty times worse than the affair of Leghorn. Why the unhappy Portuguese did not make their peace at the same time with Spain

I cannot conceive, except, as was most probably the case, they durst not consult their own safety for fear of offending the English. What an execrable nation that is, and how cordially I hate them. If this affair of Portugal is true, there will not remain one port friendly to England from Hamburg to Trieste, and probably much further both ways. It is impossible she can stand this long. Well, if the visitation of Providence be sometimes slow, it is always sure. If our expedition succeeds, I think we will give her the *coup de grace*, and make her pay dear for the rivers of blood she has made to flow in our poor country, her massacres, her pillages, and her frauds '*Alors, ce sera notre tour.*' We shall see! We shall see! Oh that I were, this fine morning, at the head of my regiment on the Cave Hill! Well, all in good time."

And still the time flew, while innumerable causes of delay interfered with the dispatch of the fleet. And in the meantime Camden and Carhampton's reign of terror was in full sway, goading the people to desperation; and the fiery *Chef-de-Brigade* gnawing his own heart in Paris, or in Rennes.

At last, but not until the 15th of December, all was on board. The troops were to have amounted to 15,000 men, but they were actually 13,975 men, with abundance of artillery and ammunition, and arms for 45,000 men. Tone was on board the line-of-battle ship *Indomptable*, of 80 guns. There were on the whole 17 sail of the line, 13 frigates, 5 corvettes, making, with transports, 43 sail. General Hoche and the Admiral in command of the fleet were on board a frigate; and the second General in command of the land forces was, unfortunately, *Grouchy*—of unlucky memory. A wretched fatality was upon this fine expedition from the very start. The first night it was at sea it lost both its chiefs; as the *Fraternité* frigate was separated from the others, and they never saw more of it until after they had returned to France. An extract, somewhat condensed, from Wolfe Tone's diary, may form the most interesting account of the fortunes and fates of the Bantry Bay Expedition:—

"Admiral Morand de Galles, General Hoche, General Debelle, and Colonel Shee, are aboard the *Fraternité*, and God knows what has become of them. The wind, too, continues against us, and, altogether, I am in terrible low spirits. How if these damned English should catch us at last, after having gone on successfully thus far. Our force leaving Brest water was as follows:—*Indomptable*, 80 guns;



Nestor, Cassard, Droits de l'Homme, Tourville, Eole, Fougueux, Mucius, Redoubtable, Patriote, Pluton, Constitution, Trajan, Watigny, Pegase, Revolution, and the unfortunate Séduisant, of 74 guns (17 sail of the line); La Cocarde, Bravoure, Immortalité, Bellone, Coquille, Romaine, Sirene, Impatiente, Surveillante, Charente, Résolue, Tartare, and Fraternité, frigates of 36 guns (13 frigates); Scevola and Fidele, armés en flutes; Mutine, Renard, Atalante, Voltiguer, and Affronteur, corvettes; and Nicodeme, Justine, Ville d'Orient, Suffren, Experiment, and Alegre, transports; making in all 43 sail. Of these there are missing this day, at three o'clock, the Nestor and Séduisant, of 74; the Fraternité, Cocarde, and Romaine, frigates; the Mutine and Voltiguer corvettes; and three other transports.

"*December 20th.*—Last night, in moderate weather, we contrived to separate again, and this morning, at eight o'clock, we are but fifteen sail in company, with a foul wind, and hazy. We shall lie beating about here, within thirty leagues of Cape Clear, until the English come and catch us, which will be truly agreeable. At ten, several sail in sight to windward; I suppose they are our stray sheep. It is scandalous to part company twice in four days in such moderate weather as we have had, but sea affairs I see are not our *forte*. Captain Bedout is a seaman, which I fancy is more than can be said for nine-tenths of his confreres.

"*December 21st.*—Last night, just at sunset, signal for seven sail in the offing; all in high spirits, in hopes that it is our comrades; stark calm all the fore part of the night; at length a breeze sprung up, and this morning, at daybreak, we are under Cape Clear, distant about four leagues, so I have, at all events, once more seen my country; but the pleasure I should otherwise feel at this, is totally destroyed by the absence of the General, who has not joined us, and of whom we know nothing. The sails we saw last night have disappeared, and we are all in uncertainty. It is most delicious weather, with a favourable wind, and everything, in short, that we can desire, except our absent comrades. At the moment I write this we are under easy sail within three leagues, at most, of the coast, so that I can discover, here and there, patches of snow on the mountains. What if the General should not join us! If we cruise here five days, according to our instructions, the English will be upon us, and then all is over. We are thirty-five sail in company, and seven or eight

absent. Is that such a separation of our force, as, under all the circumstances, will warrant our following the letter of our orders, to the certain failure of the expedition? If Grouchy and Bouvet be men of spirit and decision, they will land immediately, and trust to their success for justification. If they be not, and if this day passes without our seeing the General, I much fear the game is up. I am in undescrivable anxiety, and Cherin, who commands aboard, is a poor creature, to whom it is vain to speak; not but I believe he is brave enough but he has a little mind. There cannot be imagined a situation more provokingly tantalizing than mine at this moment, within view, almost within reach, of my native land, and uncertain whether I shall ever set my foot on it. We are now, nine o'clock, at the rendezvous appointed; stood in for the coast till twelve, when we were near enough to toss a biscuit ashore; at twelve, tacked and stood out again, so now we have begun our cruise of five days in all its forms, and shall, in obedience to the letter of our instructions, ruin the expedition, and destroy the remnant of the French navy, with a precision and punctuality which will be truly edifying. We opened Bantry Bay, and, in all my life, rage never entered so deeply into my heart as when we turned our backs on the coast. At half after one, the Atalante, one of our missing corvettes, hove in sight, so now again we are in hopes to see the General. Oh! if he were in Grouchy's place, he would not hesitate one moment. Continue making short boards; the wind foul.

"*December 22d.*—This morning, at eight, we have neared Bantry Bay considerably, but the fleet is terribly scattered; no news of the Fraternité; I believe it is the first instance of an Admiral in a clean frigate, with moderate weather and moonlight nights, parting company with his fleet. Captain Grammont, our First Lieutenant, told me his opinion is that she is either taken or lost, and, in either event, it is a terrible blow to us. All rests now upon Grouchy, and I hope he may turn out well; he has a glorious game in his hands, if he has spirit and talent to play it. If he succeeds, it will immortalize him. I do not at all like the countenance of the Etat Major in this crisis. When they speak of the expedition, it is in a style of despondency, and when they are not speaking of it, they are playing cards and laughing; they are every one of them brave of their persons, but I see nothing of that spirit of enterprise, combined with a steady resolution, which our present situation demands.



They stared at me this morning, when I said that Grouchy was the man in the whole army who had least reason to regret the absence of the General, and began to talk of responsibility and difficulties, as if any great enterprise was without responsibility and difficulties. I was burning with rage, however I said nothing, and will say nothing until I get ashore, if ever I am so happy as to arrive there. We are gaining the Bay by slow degrees, with a head wind at east, where it has hung these five weeks. To-night we hope, if nothing extraordinary happens, to cast anchor in the mouth of the Bay, and work up to-morrow morning; these delays are dreadful to my impatience. I am now so near the shore that I can see, distinctly, two old castles, yet I am utterly uncertain whether I shall ever set foot on it. According to appearances, Bouvet and Grouchy are resolved to proceed; that is a great point gained, however. Two o'clock; we have been tacking ever since eight this morning, and I am sure we have not gained one hundred yards; the wind is right ahead, and the fleet dispersed, several being far to leeward. I have been looking over the schedule of our arms, artillery, and ammunition; we are well provided; we have 41,160 stand of arms, twenty pieces of field artillery, and nine of siege, including mortars and howitzers; 61,200 barrels of powder, 7,000,000 musket cartridges, and 700,000 flints, besides an infinite variety of articles belonging to the train, but we have neither sabres nor pistols for the cavalry; however, we have nearly three regiments of hussars embarked, so that we can dispense with them. I continue very discreetly to say little or nothing, as my situation just now is rather a delicate one; if we were once ashore, and things turn out to my mind, I shall soon be out of my trammels, and, perhaps in that respect, I may be better off with Grouchy than with Hoche. If the people act with spirit, as I hope they will, it is no matter who is general, and if they do not, all the talents of Hoche would not save us; so it comes to the same thing at last. At half-past six cast anchor off Beer Island, being still four leagues from our landing-place, at work with General Cherin, writing and translating proclamations, etc., all our printed papers, including my two pamphlets, being on board the *Fraternité*, which is pleasant.

"December 23d.—Last night it blew a heavy gale from the eastward, with snow, so that the mountains are covered this morning, which will render our bivouacs

extremely amusing. It is to be observed, that of the thirty-two points of the compass, the E. is precisely the most unfavourable to us. In consequence, we are this morning separated for the fourth time; sixteen sail, including nine or ten of the line, with Bouvet and Grouchy, are at anchor with us, and about twenty are blown to sea; luckily the gale set from the shore, so I am in hopes no mischief will ensue. The wind is still high, and, as usual, right ahead; and I dread a visit from the English, and altogether I am in great uneasiness. Oh! that we were once ashore, let what might ensue after; I am sick to the very soul of this suspense. It is curious to see how things are managed in this best of all possible worlds. We are here, sixteen sail, great and small, scattered up and down in a noble bay, and so dispersed that there are not two together in any spot, save one, and there they are now so close that if it blows to-night as it did last night, they will inevitably run foul of each other, unless one of them prefers driving on shore. We lie in this disorder expecting a visit from the English every hour, without taking a single step for our defence, even to the common one of having a frigate in the harbour's mouth to give us notice of their approach; to judge by appearances, we have less to dread here than in Brest water, for when we were there, we had four corvettes stationed off the *goulet*, besides the signal posts. I confess this degree of security passes my comprehension. The day has passed without the appearance of one vessel, friend or enemy, the wind rather more moderate, but still ahead. To-night, on examining the returns with Waudré, Chef d'Etat Major of the Artillery, I find our means so reduced by the absence of the missing, that I think it hardly possible to make an attempt here with any prospect of success; in consequence, I took Cherin into the Captain's room, and told him frankly my opinion of our actual state, and that I thought it our duty, since we must look upon the main object as now unattainable, unless the whole of our friends returned to-morrow, and the English gave us our own time, which was hardly to be expected, to see what could be best done for the honour and interest of the Republic, with the force which remained in our hands, and I proposed to him to give me the *Legion des Francs*, a company of the *Artillerie légère*, and as many officers as desired to come volunteers in the expedition, with what arms and store remained, which are now reduced by our separation to four field



pieces, 20,000 firelocks at most, 1000 lbs. of powder, and 3,000,000 cartridges, and to land us in Sligo Bay, and let us make the best of our way; if we succeeded, the Republic would gain infinitely in reputation and interest, and, if we failed, the loss would be trifling, as the expense was already incurred, and as for the legion, he knew what kind of desperadoes it was composed of, and for what purpose; consequently, in the worst event, the Republic would be well rid of them; finally, I added, that though I asked the command, it was on the supposition that none of the Generals would risk their reputation on such a desperate enterprise, and that if another was found I would be content to go as a simple volunteer. This was the outline of my proposal, which I pressed on him with such arguments as occurred to me, concluding by observing that as a foreigner in the French service, my situation was a delicate one, and if I were simply an officer, I would obey in silence the orders of superiors, but from my connections in Ireland, having obtained the confidence of the Directory, so far as to induce them to appoint me to the rank of *Chef-de-Brigade*, and of General Hoche, who had nominated me Adjutant-General, I thought it my duty, both to France and Ireland, to speak on this occasion, and that I only offered my plan as a *pis aller*, in case nothing better suggested itself. Cherin answered that I did very right to give my opinion, and that as he expected a council of war would be called tomorrow, he would bring me with him, and I should have an opportunity to press it. The discourse rested there, and tomorrow we shall see more, if we are not agreeably surprised, early in the morning, by a visit from the English, which is highly probable. I am now so near the shore that I can in a manner touch the sides of Bantry Bay with my right and left hand, yet God knows whether I shall ever tread again on Irish ground. Another thing, we are now three days in Bantry Bay; if we do not land immediately, the enemy will collect a superior force, and perhaps repay us our victory of Quiberon. In an enterprise like ours, everything depends upon the promptitude and audacity of our first movements, and we are here, I am sorry to say it, most pitifully languid. It is mortifying, but that is too poor a word; I could tear my flesh with rage and vexation, but that advances nothing, and so I hold my tongue in general, and de-tour my melancholy as I can. To come so near and then to fail, if we are to fail! And every one aboard seems now to have given up all hopes.

"December 24th. — This morning the whole Etat Major has been miraculously converted, and it was agreed, in full council, that General Cherin, Colonel Waudré, Chef d'Etat Major of the Artillery, and myself, should go aboard the *Immortalité*, and press General Grouchy in the strongest manner to proceed on the expedition, with the ruins of our scattered army. Accordingly, we made a signal to speak with the Admiral, and in about an hour we were aboard. I must do Grouchy the justice to say, that the moment we gave our opinion in favour of proceeding, he took his part decidedly, and like a man of spirit; he instantly set about preparing the *ordre de bataille*, and we finished it without delay. We are not more than 6,500 strong, but they are tried soldiers who have seen fire, and I have the strongest hopes that, after all, we shall bring our enterprise to a glorious termination. It is a bold attempt, and truly original. All the time we were preparing the *ordre de bataille*, we were laughing most immoderately at the poverty of our means, and I believe, under the circumstances, it was the merriest council of war that was ever held; but '*Des Chevaliers Francais tel est le caractère.*' Grouchy, the Commander-in-Chief, never had so few men under his orders since he was Adjutant-General, Waudré, who is lieutenant-colonel, finds himself now at the head of the artillery, which is a furious park, consisting of one piece of eight, one of four, and two six inch howitzers; when he was a captain, he never commanded fewer than ten pieces, but now that he is in fact General of the Artillery, he prefers taking the field with four. He is a gallant fellow, and offered, on my proposal last night, to remain with me and command his company, in case General Grouchy had agreed to the proposal I made to Cherin. It is altogether an enterprise truly *unique*; we have not one guinea; we have not a tent; we have not a horse to draw our four pieces of artillery; the General-in-Chief marches on foot; we leave all our baggage behind us; we have nothing but the arms in our hands, the clothes on our backs, and a good courage; but that is sufficient. With all these original circumstances, such as I believe never were found united in an expedition of such magnitude as that we are about to attempt, we are all as gay as larks. I never saw the French character better exemplified than in this morning's business. Well, at last I believe we are about to disembark; God knows how I long for it. But this infernal easterly wind continues without remorse, and



though we have been under way three or four hours, and made I believe three hundred tacks, we do not seem to my eyes to have gained one hundred yards in a straight line. One hour and a half of good wind would carry us up, and perhaps we may be yet two days. My enemy, the wind, seems just now, at eight o'clock, to relent a little, so we may reach Bantry by to-morrow. The enemy has now had four days to recover from his panic, and prepare to receive us; so much the worse, but I do not mind it. We purpose to make a race for Cork, as if the devil were in our bodies, and when we are fairly there, we will stop for a day or two to take breath, and look about us. From Bantry to Cork is about forty-five miles, which, with all our efforts, will take us three days, and I suppose we may have a brush by the way, but I think we are able to deal with any force that can, at a week's notice, be brought against us.

" *December 25th.*—These memorandums are a strange mixture. Sometimes I am in preposterously high spirits, and at other times I am as dejected, according to the posture of our affairs. Last night I had the strongest expectations that to-day we should debark, but at two this morning I was awakened by the wind. I rose immediately, and, wrapping myself in my great coat, walked for an hour in the gallery, devoured by the most gloomy reflections. The wind continues right ahead, so that it is absolutely impossible to work up to the landing place, and God knows when it will change. The same wind is exactly favourable to bring the English upon us, and these cruel delays give the enemy time to assemble his entire force in this neighbourhood, and perhaps (it is, unfortunately, more than perhaps), by his superiority in numbers, in cavalry, in artillery, in money, in provisions, in short in everything we want, to crush us, supposing we are even able to effectuate a landing at last, at the same time that the fleet will be caught as in a trap. Had we been able to land the first day and march directly to Cork, we should have infallibly carried it by a *coup de main*; and then we should have a footing in the country, but as it is—if we are taken, my fate will not be a mild one; the best I can expect is to be shot as an *émigré rentré*, unless I have the good fortune to be killed in the action; for most assuredly if the enemy will have us, he must fight for us. Perhaps I may be reserved for a trial, for the sake of striking terror into others, in which case I shall be hanged as a traitor, and emboweled, &c. As to the emboweling, '*je m'en fiche*' if ever they hang me, they

are welcome to embowel me if they please. These are pleasant prospects! Nothing on earth could sustain me now, but the consciousness that I am engaged in a just and righteous cause. For my family, I have, by a desperate effort, surmounted my natural feelings so far, that I do not think of them at this moment. This day at twelve, the wind blows a gale, still from the east, and our situation is now as critical as possible, for it is morally certain that this day or to-morrow on the morning, the English fleet will be in the harbour's mouth, and then adieu to everything. In this desperate state of affairs, I proposed to Cherin to sally out with all our forces, to mount to the Shannon, and, disembarking the troops, make a forced march to Limerick, which is probably unguarded, the garrison being, I am pretty certain, on its march to oppose us here; to pass the river at Limerick, and, by forced marches push to the North. I detailed all this on a paper which I will keep, and showed it to Captain Bedout, and all the Generals on board, Cherin, Simon, and Chasseloup. They all agreed as to the advantages of the plan, but after settling it, we find it impossible to communicate with the General and Admiral, who are in the *Immortalité*, nearly two leagues ahead, and the wind is now so high and foul, and the sea so rough, that no boat can live, so all communication is impracticable, and to-morrow morning it will, most probably, be too late; and on this circumstance, perhaps, the fate of the expedition and the liberty of Ireland depends. I cannot conceive for what reason the two Commanders-in-Chief are shut up together in a frigate. Surely they should be on board the flag-ship. But that is not the first misfortune resulting from this arrangement. Had General Hoche remained, as he ought, on board the *Indomptable*, with his *Etat Major*, he would not have been separated and taken by the English, as he most probably is; nor should we be in the difficulties we now find ourselves in, and which most probably to-morrow will render insurmountable. Well, it does not signify complaining. Our first capital error was in setting sail too late from the Bay of Camaret, by which means we were obliged to pass the Raz in the night, which caused the loss of the *Seduisant*, the separation of the fleet, the capture of the General, and above all, the loss of time resulting from all this, and which is never to be recovered. Our second error was in losing an entire day in cruising off the Bay, when we might have entered and effected a



landing with thirty-five sail, which would have secured everything, and now our third error is having our Commander-in-Chief separated from the *Etat Major*, which renders all communication utterly impossible. My prospects at this hour are as gloomy as possible. I see nothing before me, unless a miracle be wrought in our favour, but the ruin of the expedition, the slavery of my country, and my own destruction. Well, if I am to fall, at least I will sell my life as dear as individual resistance can make it. So now I have made up my mind. I have a merry Christmas of it to-day.

*December 26th.*—Last night, at half after six o'clock, in a heavy gale of wind still from the east, we were surprised by the Admiral's frigate running under our quarter, and hailing the *Indomptable*, with orders to cut our cable and put to sea instantly; the frigate then pursued her course, leaving us all in the utmost astonishment. Our first idea was that it might be an English frigate, lurking in the bottom of the Bay, which took advantage of the storm and darkness of the night to make her escape, and wished to separate our squadron by this stratagem; for it seems utterly incredible that an Admiral should cut and run in this manner, without any previous signal of any kind to warn the fleet, and that the first notice we should have of his intention, should be his hailing us in this extraordinary manner, with such unexpected and peremptory orders. After a short consultation with his officers, (considering the storm, the darkness of the night, that we have two anchors out, and only one spare one in the hold), Captain Bedout resolved to wait, at all events, till to-morrow morning, in order to ascertain whether it was really the Admiral who hailed us. The morning is now come, the gale continues, and the fog is so thick that we cannot see a ship's length ahead; so here we lie in the utmost uncertainty and anxiety. In all probability we are now left without Admiral or General; if so, Cherin will command the troops, and Bedout the fleet, but, at all events, there is an end of the expedition. Certainly we have been persecuted by a strange fatality, from the very night of our departure to this hour. We have lost two Commanders-in-Chief; of four Admirals not one remains; we have lost one ship of the line, that we know of, and probably many others of which we know nothing; we have been now six days in Bantry Bay, within five hundred yards of the shore, without being able to effectuate a landing; we have been dispersed four times in four days, and, at

this moment, of forty-three sail, of which the expedition consisted, we can muster of all sizes but fourteen. There only wants our falling in with the English to complete our destruction; and, to judge of the future by the past, there is every probability that that will not be wanting. All our hopes are now reduced to get back in safety to Brest, and I believe we will set sail for that port the instant the weather will permit. I confess, myself, I now look on the expedition as impracticable. The enemy has had seven days to prepare for us, and three, or perhaps four, days more before we could arrive at Cork; and we are now too much reduced, in all respects, to make the attempt with any prospect of success—so all is over! It is hard, after having forced my way thus far, to be obliged to turn back; but it is my fate, and I must submit. Notwithstanding all our blunders, it is the dreadful stormy weather and easterly winds, which have been blowing furiously and without intermission, since we made Bantry Bay, that have ruined us. Well, England has not had such an escape since the Spanish Armada, and that expedition, like ours, was defeated by the weather; the elements fight against us, and courage is here of no avail. Well, let me think no more about it; it is lost, and let it go!

*"December 27th.*—Yesterday several vessels, including the *Indomptable*, dragged their anchors several times, and it was with great difficulty they rode out the gale. At two o'clock, the *Revolution*, a 74, made signal that she could hold no longer, and, in consequence of the Commodore's permission, who now commands our little squadron, cut her only cable and put to sea. In the night, the *Patriote* and *Pluton*, of 74 each, were forced to go to sea, with the *Nicomede* flute, so that this morning we are reduced to seven sail of the line and one frigate. Any attempt here is now desperate, but I still think if we were debarked at the mouth of the Shannon we might yet recover all. At ten o'clock the Commodore made signal to get under way, which was delayed by one of the ships, which required an hour to get ready. This hour we availed ourselves of to hold a council of war, at which were present Generals Cherin, Harty, and Humbert, who came from their ships for that purpose; Adjutant-Generals Simon, Chasseloup, and myself; Lieutenant-Colonel Waudré, commanding the artillery, and Favory, Captain of Engineers, together with Commodore Bedout, who was invited to assist; General Harty, as senior officer, being President. It was agreed that, our force being now



reduced to 4168 men, our artillery to two four-pounders, our ammunition to 1,500,000 cartridges and 500 rounds for the artillery, with 500 pounds of powder — this part of the country being utterly wild and savage, furnishing neither provisions nor horses, and especially as the enemy, having seven days' notice, together with three more which it would require to reach Cork, supposing we even met with no obstacle, had time more than sufficient to assemble his forces in numbers sufficient to crush our little army; considering, moreover, that this province is the only one of the four which has testified no disposition to revolt; that it is the most remote from the party which is ready for insurrection; and, finally, Captain Bedout having communicated his instructions, which are to mount as high as the Shannon, and cruise there five days; it was unanimously agreed to quit Bantry Bay directly, and proceed for the mouth of the Shannon, in hopes to rejoin some of our scattered companions; and when we are there we will determine, according to the means in our hands, what part we shall take. I am the more content with this determination as it is substantially the same with the paper which I read to General Cherin and the rest the day before yesterday. The wind, at last, has come round to the southward, and the signal is now flying to get under way. At half after four, there being every appearance of a stormy night, three vessels cut their cables and put to sea. The *Indomptable*, having with great difficulty weighed one anchor, we were forced at length to cut the cable of the other, and make the best of our way out of the Bay, being followed by the whole of our little squadron, now reduced to ten sail, of which seven are of the line, one frigate, and two corvettes or luggers.

"*December 28th.*—Last night it blew a perfect hurricane. At one this morning, a dreadful sea took the ship in the quarter, stove in the quarter gallery, and one of the dead-lights in the great cabin, which was instantly filled with water to the depth of three feet. Immediately after this blow, the wind abated, and at daylight, having run nine knots an hour, under one jib only, during the hurricane, we found ourselves at the rendezvous, having parted company with three ships of the line and the frigate, which makes our *sixth* separation. The frigate *Coquille* joined us in the course of the day, which we spent standing off and on the shore, without being joined by any of our missing companions.

"*December 29th.*—At four this morning

the Commodore made the signal to steer for France; so there is an end of our expedition for the present, perhaps for ever. I spent all yesterday in my hammock, partly through sea-sickness, and much more through vexation. At ten, we made prize of an unfortunate brig, bound from Lisbon to Cork, laden with salt, which we sunk.

"*December 30th and 31st.*—On our way to Brest. It will be well supposed I am in no great humour to make memorandums. This is the last day of the year 1796, which has been a very remarkable one in my history.

"*January 1st, 1797.*—At eight this morning made the Island of Ushant, and at twelve opened the *Goulet*. We arrive seven sail: the *Indomptable* of 80; the *Watigny*, *Cassard*, and *Eole*, 74; the *Coquille*, 36; the *Atalante*, 20, and the *Vautour* lugger, of 14. We left Brest forty-three sail, of which seventeen were of the line. I am utterly astonished that we did not see a single English ship-of-war, going nor coming back. They must have taken their measures very ill, not to intercept us, but perhaps they have picked up some of our missing ships. Well, this evening will explain all, and we shall see now what is become of our four Admirals, and of our two Generals-in-Chief."

So ended the great "Bantry Bay Expedition." Fifteen days after the arrival of *Tone* at Brest, the missing frigate *La Fraternité*, with General Hoche and the Admiral on board, made her way, after many dangers, into the port of *La Rochelle*.

In addition to the hostility of the elements, this attempt at an invasion of Ireland had certain other disadvantages to contend with: it was directed to that portion of the island which was the least ripe for insurrection, and in which the United Irish Society was least extended and organized. It arrived at a part of the coast surrounded by desolate mountains, where there were but small resources for a commissariat, where no good horses could be found for the artillery and waggons, and where the wretched population had scarcely ever heard either of a French Republic, or of an United Irish Society, or of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. This was against the wishes and counsels of Wolfe Tone, who was in favour of the landing somewhere near Dublin or Belfast. So ignorant and so ill-prepared were the natives of Bear and Bantry, that they regarded the liberating force as a hostile invasion; and Plowden informs us that when a boat was sent ashore from



the squadron to reconnoitre the country, "it was immediately captured, and multitudes appeared on the beach in readiness to oppose a landing." In addition to this, the English Government had always full and accurate information as to the whole plan of invasion, and had thus been enabled to deceive the leaders of the United Irishmen by false information. The whole affair is thus accurately explained in the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords in 1798 (Lords' Journal, viii., p. 142):—

"It appears by the Report of the Secret Committee of this House, made in the last session of Parliament, that a messenger had been dispatched by the Society of United Irishmen to the Executive Directory of the French Republic, upon a treasonable mission, between the month of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and the month of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, at which time the messenger so sent had returned to Ireland; and your committee have strong reason to believe that Edward John Lewins, who now is, and has been for a considerable time, the accredited resident ambassador of the Irish Rebelious Union to the French Republic, was the person thus despatched in the summer of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five. It appears to your committee that the proposition so made by the French Directory, of assistance to the rebels of this kingdom, was taken into consideration by the Executive Directory of the Irish Union immediately after it was communicated to them, that they did agree to accept the proffered assistance, and that their determination was made known to the Directory of the French Republic by a special messenger; and your committee have strong reason to believe that the invasion of this kingdom which was afterwards attempted, was fully arranged at an interview which took place in Switzerland, in the summer of one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, near the French frontier, between Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the aforesaid Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and General Hoche. It appears to your committee, that in the month of October or November, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, the hostile armament which soon after appeared in Bantry Bay was announced to the Irish Directory by a special messenger dispatched from France, who was also instructed to inquire into the state of preparation in which this country stood, which armament was then stated to the Irish Directory to consist of fifteen thousand troops, together with a

considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, intended for the use of the Irish Republican Union. In a few days after the departure of the messenger who had been thus sent to announce the speedy arrival of this armament on the coasts of this kingdom, it appears to your committee *that a letter from France was received by the Irish Directory, which was considered by them as authentic*, stating that the projected descent was postponed for some months, and to this circumstance it has been fairly acknowledged to your committee, by one of the Irish Directory, that this country was indebted for the good conduct of the people in the Province of Munster, when the enemy appeared in Bantry Bay. He has confessed, *that these contradictory communications threw the Irish Directory off their guard*, in consequence of which they omitted to prepare the people for the reception of the enemy. He has confessed that the people were loyal because they were left to themselves."

## CHAPTER II.

1797.

Reign of Terror in Armagh County.—No Orangemen ever Punished.—"Defenders" called Bandidi.—"Faulkner's Journal," Organ of the Castle.—Cheers on the Orangemen.—Mr. Curran's Statement of the Havoc in Armagh.—Increased Rancour against Catholics and U. I. after the Bantry Bay Affair.—Efforts of Patriots to Establish a Permanent Armed Force.—Opposed by Government.—And Why.—Proclamation of Counties.—Bank Ordered to Suspend Specie Payments.—Alarm.—Dr. Duigenan.—Secession from Parliament of Grattan, Curran, &c.—General Lake in the North.—"Northern Star" Office Wrecked by Troops.—Proclamation.—Outrages in the Year 1797.—Salutary Effect of the United Irish System on the Peace of the Country.—Armagh Assizes.—Slandrous Report of a Secret Committee.—Good Effects of United Irishism in the South.—Miles Byrne.—Wexford County.

DURING the whole of the year that saw Tone negotiating in France for the great Bantry Bay expedition, the Government in Ireland, well seconded by magistrates, sheriffs, military officers and Orangemen was steadily proceeding, with a ferocious deliberation, in driving the people to utter despair. Many districts of Armagh County were already covered with the blackened ruins of poor cabins, lately the homes of innocent people, thousands of whom, with their old people, their women and little children, were wandering homeless and starving, or were already dead of



hunger and cold, when the Grand Jury of Armagh, at the Lent Assizes, bethinking them that it would be well to soften or do away with the impressions produced by these horrible events, and the comments of which they were the subject, agreed to an address and resolution expressive of their full determination to put the coercion laws in force, and to enforce strict justice. Mr. Plowden says, artlessly: "Their annunciation of impartial justice, and a resolution to punish offenders of every denomination, was rather unseasonable, when there remained no longer any of one denomination to commit outrages upon, or to retaliate injuries." He might have added that many of the gentlemen composing that Grand Jury had themselves encouraged and participated in the extermination of the Catholics. But they knew very well that no coercion law of that Parliament was at all intended to be enforced against Orangemen; that the "unlawful oaths forbidden under pain of death," did not mean to include the *purple oath* of Orangemen to extirpate Catholics, but only the United Irish oath, to encourage brotherly union, and seek "an impartial representation for all the people of Ireland." In fact, no Orangeman was ever prosecuted; nor was any punishment ever inflicted on the exterminators of Armagh Catholics.

This statement might seem almost incredible in any civilized nation; but the proofs of the gross partiality of the Legislature and Government, or rather of their strict alliance with the Orange faction, are too numerous and clear to be doubted. For example, a report of a secret committee of the Commons, shortly after this time, informs us, "that in the summer of 1796, the outrages committed by a banditti, calling themselves Defenders, in the Counties of Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford, Meath, Westmeath, and Kildare, together with a *religious feud* prevailing in the County of Armagh, induced the Legislature to pass a temporary act of Parliament, generally called the Insurrection Act, by which the Lord-Lieutenant and Council were enabled, upon the requisition of seven magistrates of any county, assembled at a sessions of the peace to proclaim the whole, or any part thereof, to be in a state of disturbance; within which limits this law, giving increased power to the magistracy, was to have operation." What is here mildly called a "religious feud" was the extirpation of one sect of people by another, on account of their religion alone.

The British Government in Ireland has never been able to dispense with an organ

at the Press, in the pay of the Castle. The chief Government paper of that day was *Faulkner's Journal*, which was then savage in its denunciations of Catholics, Defenders, and United Irishmen, but had only praise for the Armagh Orangemen.

The *Dublin Evening Post* of the 24th of September, 1796, contained the following observations: "The most severe stroke made against the character and conduct of the Viceroy, as a moral man and first magistrate of a free people, who 'ought not to hold the sword *in vain*,' nor to exercise it *partially*, has been in *Faulkner's Journal* of this day. That hircling print is undeniably in the pay of his lordship's administration; and what administration permits, it is supposed to prompt or patronize. In that print, the blind fury of the banditti which usurps and disgraces the name of *Orange* in the North, is applauded, and all their bloody excesses justified. Murder in all its horrid forms, assassinations in cold blood, the mutilation of members without respect to age or sex, the firing of whole hamlets, so that when the inhabitants have been looked after nothing but their ashes were to be found; the atrocious excursions of furious hordes, armed with sword, fire, and faggot, to exterminate a people for presuming to obey the divine command, written by the finger of God himself, 'Honour thy father and thy mother,' and walking in the religion which seemed good in their eyes. These are the flagitious enormities which attract the mercenary applause of *Faulkner's Journal*, the literary prop of the Camden administration."

And in this very same month of September, while *Faulkner's Journal* was doing this kind of service for Castle pay, the *Northern Star* of Belfast, an able and moderate organ of the United Irishmen, had its office attacked and ransacked by soldiers; Samuel Neilson, its editor, and several others were arrested, carried to Dublin, thrown into prison, and kept there for more than a year without having been brought to any trial.

On the 13th of October, 1796, Parliament met. In his speech from the throne, His Excellency now for the first time took tender and oblique notice of the disturbances of Armagh. "I have, however, to lament that in one part of the country good order has not yet been entirely restored; and that in other districts a treasonable system of secret confederation, by the administering of illegal oaths, still continues, although no means within the reach of Government have been left untried to counteract it."



Mr. Grattan, in the debate upon the address, objected to this speech, as betraying gross partiality, and moved the following amendment:—

“To represent to His Majesty, that the most effectual method for strengthening the country and promoting unanimity, was to take such measures, and to enact such laws, as to ensure to all His Majesty’s subjects the blessings and privileges of the constitution, without any distinction of religion.” The amendment was seconded by Mr. W. B. Ponsonby.

The debate was carried on till two o’clock in the morning with extreme heat and virulence. Mr. Grattan’s amendment was opposed, as unseasonable and *violent*, by several of those who had been in the habit of voting with him on all occasions; insomuch that the minority on the division consisted only of 12 against 149. In the course of this debate Lord Castlereagh replied with great warmth to Mr. Grattan; and Mr. Pelham spoke more at length than he usually did. He particularly adverted to the two topics which had formed the principal ground of the debate; namely, the question of Catholic Emancipation, and the disturbances of Armagh. “As to the first, he thought it very improperly brought forward at that juncture. It was then no time to make distinctions between Catholics and Protestants; *no such distinction was made by Government.*”

As for the disturbances in Armagh, of course Mr. Secretary Pelham defended the Government and the magistrates; and said if the Insurrection Act had not been applied there, as in some other counties, it was because the magistrates had not thought the nature of the troubles “would justify the application of that very severe law.”

It was in this session that the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended. This suspension together with the Insurrection and Indemnity Acts, completed the arrangements for putting out of the pale of the law about nine-tenths of the population.

When Mr. Secretary Pelham moved, on the 26th of October, 1796, that the House should adjourn for about a fortnight, Mr. Curran strongly opposed it; particularly upon the grounds of the necessity of putting an immediate check upon the still continuing outrageous disturbances of Armagh, which surpassed in horror everything he had ever heard or read. He had on the first day of the session stated the number of *families* that had become the victims of that infernal barbarity at 700; it was with great pain

he mentioned, that upon more minute inquiry, he found as many more must be added to the miserable catalogue; he was in possession of evidence, ready to be examined at their bar, and whom he hoped they would hear, that would satisfy them upon oath, that not less than 1,400 families had been thus barbarously expelled from their houses, and then were wandering about the neighbouring counties, save such of them as might have been murdered, or burned in their cottages, or perished in the fields or highways by fatigue and famine, and despair; and that horrid scene had been transacted, and was still continuing in the open day, in the heart of the kingdom, without any effectual interference whatsoever.

The public testimony of Mr Curran, which he would not have dared to give in open Parliament if it could have been contradicted, may finish the picture of the north of Ireland in this year. There were now several successive adjournments until the 6th of January, 1797. In the meantime, the French fleet had appeared in Bantry Bay, and disappeared again, giving rise to numberless rumours throughout the island, and rousing sentiments of rage and horror in one party, of hope and joy in another, but on the whole, intensifying the bitterness and vindictive passion of the “Ascendancy” against Catholics and United Irishmen, who had so nearly succeeded in bringing upon them such terrible visitors. On the re-assembling of Parliament, many members brought forward resolutions of inquiry or complaint as to the remiss conduct of the Government on occasion of the threatened invasion, of which it was well known Government had possessed timely intelligence. The reformers and emancipators of the House showed what the Castle thought a very suspicious anxiety for the defence of the country, when they proposed very large additions to the armed yeomanry of the country. The administration did not forget that in 1782 it had been this same alleged lack of sufficient defence against foreign enemies which gave occasion to the volunteering, and that when the Volunteers were enrolled and armed, they very naturally acted as if they considered England the only foreign enemy they had. The Government, therefore, would not suffer any measure of general armament to pass, but assented to a proposal of Sir John Blaquiere, for raising an additional force of 10,000 men; this, however, to be in the nature of militia, officered by Government, and the Government was to have entire control of its organization and its *personnel*.



On a subsequent night, Sir Lawrence Parsons made another attempt, by a resolution, that it was necessary to have a permanent force for protection of the country. The motion was opposed with bitter violence by Mr. Secretary Pelham. Mr. Grattan followed; and the real nature of the question at issue will be manifest in this extract from his speech:—"The Secretary asked, who could be more interested for the safety of Ireland than the British Minister? He would answer, Ireland herself. To refer to the British Minister the safety of that country was the most sottish folly; it was false and unparliamentary to say that the House had no right to recommend a measure such as the honourable baronet proposed. Had it been a proposition to increase the regular standing army, it might perhaps have been a little irregular; but when an increase of 10,000 to the standing army was proposed by a right honourable baronet the other night, it was not considered as an affront. Now another honourable baronet comes forward to give an army five fold as many, and five fold as cheap, and administration are affronted. Why? Because that army was of the people. If the doctrine the right honourable member advanced were true, and that the duty of Parliament now were become nothing more than merely to vote taxes, and echo three millions, when the Minister said three millions are wanted, then, indeed, *actum est de parlamento*; a reform of the representation was become then more than ever necessary."

It was easy for the Ministers to perceive what was in the minds of Mr. Grattan and his friends: to have another popular army strong enough at once to preserve the public peace and to protect the Constitution of the country; and Ministers were fully resolved that neither of these things should be done: the public peace was to be destroyed by insurrection, in order that the Constitution should be destroyed by legislative "union." On this motion of Sir Lawrence Parsons there was a division at four o'clock in the morning—25 voted for it, 125 against it.

In December, January, and February, of this winter, many districts in the counties of Ulster were "proclaimed" under the Insurrection Act; and more than the horrors of martial law were now raging there. The anxiety and excitement of the country had re-acted disastrously upon trade and general business interests; and in the midst of this came a sudden order from the Privy Council to the Governor and Company of the Bank of

Ireland to suspend specie payments. The manifest object of this measure was still further to aggravate that "alarm of the better classes," which is a needful and unfailing agency of British domination in Ireland; and it had the desired effect. But it also excited some attention in England; and Mr. Whitbread, in the English Commons, and Lord Moira, in the Lords, made ineffectual efforts to procure an inquiry into the conduct of Ministers with regard to Ireland. It is needless to say, these attempts were vehemently resisted by the administration, and were defeated by vast majorities. British Ministers wanted no inquiry; *they* already knew all; and all was proceeding precisely as they had ordered and intended. A singular feature of this incident is, that the debates on the state of Ireland in the English Parliament roused the patriotic indignation of the notorious Doctor Duigenan, then a member of the Irish Parliament for Armagh, a doctor of the civil law and a renegade Papist, therefore more desperately vindictive against Papists, and more abusive of their tenets than any Orangeman in the land. The Doctor was seized with a sudden fit of Irish patriotism; and gave notice in the House, on the 30th of March, that after the recess he would move a resolution condemnatory of such unconstitutional interferences, and refuting the false statements made in the other Parliament respecting Ireland by Lord Moira, Mr. Whitbread, and Mr. Fox. Mr. Grattan desired him to give due notice of that motion; as it was his intention to demonstrate that the statements were both true, and also constitutional. But Mr. Grattan had now, at length, come to perceive that labours in that Parliament were utterly thrown away. Accordingly, he determined to *secede* from the body. In a speech of his upon the state of the North, where General Lake was now dragooning the people with unexampled ferocity, he protested solemnly, but most hopelessly, that the true remedy for all the troubles lay in a just Government and reform of Parliament; and speaking of the United Irish Society: "Notwithstanding your Gunpowder Act, it has armed and increased its military stores under that Act; notwithstanding your Insurrection Act, another bill to disarm, it has greatly added to its magazines; and notwithstanding the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Bill and General Lake's proclamation, it has multiplied its proselytes. I should have asked, had I been on the Secret Committee, whether the number of United Irishmen had not increased very much



since General Lake's proclamation, and by General Lake's proclamation. It appears, I say, from that report, that just as your system of coercion advanced, the United Irishmen advanced; that the measures you took to coerce, strengthened; to disperse, collected; to disarm, armed; to render them weak and odious, made them popular and powerful; whereas, on the other hand, you have loaded Parliament and Government with the odium of an oppressive system, and with the further odium of rejecting these two popular topics, which you allow are the most likely to gain the heart of the nation, and be the beloved objects of the people."

Mr. Grattan closed his speech and the debate with these words: "We have offered you our measure; you will reject it; we deprecate yours; you will persevere; having no hopes left to persuade or dissuade, and having discharged our duty, *we shall trouble you no more, and after this day shall not attend the House of Commons.*"—17 Par. Deb., p. 570.

Accordingly, at the next general election, Mr. Grattan and Lord Henry Fitzgerald declined to be returned for Dublin. Mr. Curran, Arthur O'Connor, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald followed the example. There has been much discussion upon this "secession." It has been urged on the one hand, that Grattan and Curran and Lord Henry Fitzgerald, who still appealed to the Constitution, and acknowledged the existence and authority of a British Government in Ireland, were wrong to abandon the legal and constitutional field. On the other hand, it has been urged, that having abandoned that, the only manly and rational course left them was to join the United Irishmen, as O'Connor and Lord Edward had already done. It is hard to blame those excellent men and true Irishmen, Grattan and Curran. If they had joined the United Irish Society, they would have probably found themselves immediately in Newgate, as O'Connor and Lord Edward Fitzgerald soon after did, besides, they were not Republicans, and abhorred "French principles" as earnestly as Lord Clare himself.

When Wolfe Tone, in his French exile, heard of the secession, his observation in his journal is: "I see those illustrious patriots are at last forced to bolt out of the House of Commons, and come amongst the people, as John Keogh advised Grattan to do long since." They did bolt from the House of Commons, but did not come amongst the people.

In short, he saw now that the unhappy

country was delivered over to its bloody agony, and that he could do no more than look on in silence. General Lake had entered upon his mission with zeal; many seizures of concealed arms and ammunition were made. In the execution of these orders, some barbarous outrages were committed by the military which tended to inflame and exasperate the minds of the people, which were already too highly inflamed. Not only some women and children had been murdered, but the houses of some respectable persons were pillaged and demolished upon the bare suspicion of their being United Irishmen.

The newspaper called the *Morning Star*, in Belfast, after it had been sacked a few months earlier, had been refitted, and was again carried on with spirit, exposing the evil designs of the Ministers, and publishing boldly essays and letters in favour of civil liberty. It was, of course, necessary now that the paper should be suppressed altogether. Neilson, its first editor, and the two Simms, its proprietors, were all now in Newgate prison, though not accused of any offence whatever. The newspaper was required by military authority to insert an article reflecting on the loyalty of the people of Belfast; the article did not appear as ordered. The next morning, a detachment of soldiers marched out of the barracks, attacked the printing office, and utterly demolished every part of it, breaking the presses, scattering the types, and seizing the books. Thus disappeared the *Morning Star*, and it never rose again. There was, after that, nobody daring enough to even record or allude to, far less to denounce, the hideous atrocities which the policy of the Castle required to be perpetrated.

It was now the avowed opinion of Government that the treason was, in the course of the winter of 1796 and the spring of 1797, too deeply rooted to yield to the remedy of the law, even where it was put in force by the magistrates with activity. Such an assumption was prominently calculated to open the door to the strongest measures, and the general command given to the civil and military officers, by proclamation, to use the exertions of their utmost force, and to oppose with their full power all such as should resist them in the execution of their duty, which was to search for and seize concealed arms; admitted of a latitude of power, not very likely to be temperately regulated by raw troops let in upon a country denounced rebellious and devoted to military rigour, as a necessary substitute for the inefficacy of the municipal law. A regiment of Welsh cavalry, called the "Ancient Bri-



tons," commanded by Sir Watkin William Wynne, were at all times prominently conspicuous for the rigorous execution of any orders for devastation, destruction, or extermination. They were marked for it by the rebels, and in the course of the rebellion they were cut to pieces almost to a man.

That proclamation above mentioned, which was published on the 17th of May, was sent to Lord Carhampton, with a letter from Mr. Pelham on the 18th of May, in consequence of which his lordship immediately published the following order:—"In obedience to the order of the Lord-Lieutenant in Council, it is the Commander-in-Chief's commands that the military do act, without waiting for directions from the civil magistrates, in dispersing any tumultuous or unlawful assemblies of persons threatening the peace of the realm, and the safety of the lives and properties of His Majesty's loyal subjects wheresoever collected."

This proclamation, together with the laws then in existence and the known wishes of the authorities, left everything at the discretion of the soldiery; *they* were to determine what was an unlawful assembly; and we shall find that they often treated as such families asleep in their own beds at night, provided there were any pretext for *suspecting* the existence of weapons in the house, or any information of an United Irish oath having been administered there.

Of the outrages done in the course of this year, 1797, it is now impossible to procure anything like a complete account. Yet a few examples, well authenticated, must be given to show how martial law worked in those days. Doctor Madden, the indefatigable Collector of Documents relating to the period, has republished the pamphlet before cited, called, "View of the Present State of Ireland." It was published the same year in London, because no printer in Ireland could have dared to print it. The statements of this pamphlet have never been contradicted; and old James Hope, one of the last survivors of the United Irishmen, and a person of intelligence and integrity, thus indorsed it to Dr. Madden:—"This pamphlet contains more truth than all the volumes I have seen written on the events of 1797 and 1798." We select a few extracts:—

"In the month of May last, a party of the Essex Fencibles, accompanied by the Enniskillen Yeomen Infantry, commanded by their First-Lieutenant, marched to the house of a Mr. Potter, a very respectable farmer, who lived within five miles of

Enniskillen, in the County of Fermanagh. On their arrival, they demanded Mr Potter, saying they were ordered to arrest him, as he was charged with being an United Irishman. His wife, with much firmness, replied, 'that to be an United Irishman was an honour, not a disgrace; that her husband had gone from home the preceding day on business, and had not yet returned.' They assured her that if he did not surrender himself in *three hours* they would burn his house. Mrs. Potter answered, 'that she did not know exactly where he then was, but, if she did know, she believed it would be impossible to have him home in so *short a time*.' In less than three hours they set fire to the house, which was a very neat one, only about five years built; the servants brought out some beds and other valuable articles, in the hopes of preserving them, but the military dashed all back into the flames. The house and property to the amount of six or seven hundred pounds were consumed, and Mrs. Potter, with seven children, one of them not a month old, were turned out, at the hour of midnight, into the fields.

"In June, 1797, a party of the Ancient Britons (a fencible regiment), commanded by Sir Watkin William Wynne, were ordered to examine the house of Mr. Rice, an innkeeper in the town of Coolavil, County of Armagh, for arms; but on making very diligent search, none could be found. There were some country people drinking in the house, and discoursing in their *native language*; the soldiers damned their *eternal Irish souls*, said they were speaking *treason*, and instantly fell on them with their swords, and maimed several desperately. Miss Rice was so badly wounded that her life was despaired of, and her father escaped with much difficulty, after having received many cuts from the sabres of these assassins.

"In June, some persons had been refreshing themselves at an inn in Newtownards, County of Down, kept by a Mr. M'Cormick, and it was alleged that they were overheard uttering words termed seditious. M'Cormick was afterwards called on to give information who *they* were; he denied having any knowledge of them, observing that many people might come into his house whom he did not know, and for whom he could not be accountable. He was taken into custody, and next day his house and extensive property were reduced to ashes. The house of Dr. Jackson was torn down on *suspicion* of his being an *United Irishman*; and many other houses in that town and barony were



destroyed, or otherwise demolished, by English Fencibles, on similar pretexts.

"On the 22d of June, Mr. Joseph Clotney, of Ballinahinch, was committed to the Military Barracks, Belfast, and his house, furniture, and books, worth three thousand pounds, destroyed; also the valuable house of Mr. Armstrong, of that place, was totally demolished."

"A party of fencibles, then quartered in Enniskillen, were ordered, under the command of a captain and adjutant, accompanied by the First Fermanagh Yeomanry, into an adjoining county to search for arms. About two o'clock in the morning they arrived at the house of one Durnian, a farmer, which, without any previous intimation whatever, they broke open, and on entering it, one of the fencibles fired his musket through the roof of the house; an officer instantly discharged his pistol into a bed where two young men were lying, and wounded them both. One of them, *the only child* of Durnian, rose with great difficulty, and on making this effort, faint with the loss of blood, a fencible stabbed him through the bowels. His distracted mother ran to support him, but in a few moments she sank upon the floor, covered with the blood which issued from the side of her unfortunate son; by this time the other young man had got on his knees to implore mercy, declaring most solemnly that they had not been guilty of any crime, when another fencible *deliberately knelt down*, levelled his musket at him, and was just going to fire, when a sergeant of yeomanry rushed in, seized, and prevented his committing the horrid deed. There were persons *who smiled* at the humanity of the sergeant.

"Information had been lodged that a house near Newry contained concealed arms. A party of the Ancient Britons repaired to the house, but not finding the object of their search, they set it on fire. The peasantry of the neighbourhood came running from all sides to extinguish the flames, believing the fire to have been accidental—it was the first military one in that part of the country. As they came up they were attacked in all directions, and cut down by the fencibles; thirty were killed, among whom were a woman and two children. An old man (about seventy years), seeing the dreadful slaughter of his neighbours and friends, fled for safety to some adjacent rocks; he was pursued, and, though on his knees imploring mercy, a brutal Welshman cut off his head at a blow.

"I have stated incontrovertible truths. Months would be insufficient to enumerate all the acts of wanton cruelty which

were inflicted on the inhabitants of Ireland from the 1st day of April to the 24th day of July, 1797."

The same authority narrates this fact also, but without date: "The house of Mr. Bernard Crossan, of the parish of Mullanabrack, was attacked by Orangemen, in consequence of being a *reputed* Catholic. His son prevented them from entering by the front door, upon which they broke in at the back part of the house, and, firing on the inhabitants, killed Mr. Crossan, his son, and daughter. Mr. Hugh M'Fay, of the parish of Seagoe, had his house likewise attacked on the same pretence, himself wounded, his furniture destroyed, and his wife barbarously used."

The same writer mentions that, "information having been lodged against a few individuals living in the village of Kilrea, in the County of Derry, for being United Irishmen, a party of the military were ordered to apprehend them; the men avoided the capture, and about three o'clock in the morning, a *reverend* magistrate, accompanied by a clergyman and a body of soldiers came to the village, and not finding the men, who had avoided capture, they burned all their houses, except four, which could not be burned without endangering the whole village. These they *gutted*, and consumed their contents."

It must be remembered that these scenes, which are but a few samples, all took place in the year 1797, and before there was any insurrection in Ireland; and all in two or three counties of one province. But if there was no insurrection, it was fully resolved at the Castle to provoke one. A remarkable saying used a short time before by a remarkable man, and a very fit partizan of the Irish Government, leaves but little doubt upon the real aims and wishes of the "Ascendency." The man was John Claudius Beresford, of the noble house of Tyrone and Waterford, and one of the most ferocious tyrants in the world—we shall hear of him again at the "Riding School." On the 30th of March, in this year, in his place in Parliament, he thus *corrects*, or rather confirms, the saying attributed to him:—

"Mr. J. C. Beresford begged to correct a misstatement which had gone abroad of what he had said in a former debate on the Insurrection bill. It had been stated in a country paper, and from thence copied into those of Dublin, that he had expressed a wish 'that the whole of the North of Ireland were in open rebellion, that the Government might cut



them off.' This had been very assiduously circulated, to the detriment of his character; and was, he could confidently say, a falsehood. What he had said was, 'that there *were* certain parts of the North of Ireland in a state of concealed rebellion; and that he wished those places were *rather* in a state of open rebellion, that the Government might see the rebellion, and crush it.'"

It was observed that after the late extensive spread of the United Irish Society in the North, "Defenderism" had in a great measure ceased there. Many thousands of those who had been Defenders joined their Presbyterian neighbours in the "Union." This, in fact, was the great object of the Union, and the warmest hope of its promoters. The United Irish Societies of Ulster alone, according to a return seized by Government in Belfast, counted, at least, on paper, one hundred thousand men in the month of April. They became more confident in their strength; and having resolved to defer any general rising until the following year, they would not be goaded into a premature outbreak. During the Summer Assizes, although there were very numerous convictions for the usual class of offences attributed to United Irishmen and Defenders (for it was never thought of to prosecute Orangemen, the only criminals), yet there were also several acquittals, greatly to the satisfaction of the United Irish, and to the dismay of the Government. This certainly arose from the greater difficulty which the sheriffs now had in packing sure juries, not being able to tell now who might, or might not, be United Irishmen. Mr. Curran defended many cases on the North-east Circuit, amongst which may be mentioned those which occurred in Armagh. There were in the jail of that town twenty-eight persons accused of this species of alleged offence, of whom, however, two trials only were brought to trial. In the former, a suborned soldier, who was brought forward to prosecute one Dogherty, was, upon Dogherty's acquittal, put into the dock in his place to abide his trial for perjury. The Grand Jury found bills against him, and he remained in custody to abide his trial.

The only other trial was that of the King against Hanlon and Nogher, charged with contemptuously, maliciously, and feloniously tendering to the prosecutor an unlawful oath or engagement to become one of an unlawful, wicked, and seditious society, called United Irishmen.

One witness only was produced in support of this indictment, a soldier of the

Twenty-fourth Light Dragoons of the name of Fisher, who swore to the administration of an oath, "to be united in brotherhood to pull down the head clergy and half-pay officers." He, upon his cross-examination, said that the obligation had been shown and read to him in a small book of four leaves, which he had read, and would know again. The Constitution of the United Irishmen was then put into his hands by the defendant's counsel, and he admitted the test contained in it to be the same that he had taken.

On the part of the prisoners, A. T. Stewart, Esq., of Acton, was examined and cross-examined by the Crown. The sum of his testimony was, that this Society had made rapid progress through the people of all religions, ranks, and classes; that before its introduction into that country the most horrible religious persecutions existed, attended with murder and extirpation; that since its introduction these atrocities had subsided, as far as he could learn. He admitted he had heard of murders laid to their charge, but could hardly believe such charges, as he conceived them incompatible with any thing he ever could learn of the principles or consequences of their institution.

The jailor was also examined, who said that fewer persons had been sent to him upon charges of wrecking and robbing houses, or of murder, than before, and that he understood the religious parties began to agree better together and to fight less.

There was no other material evidence. Mr. Curran spoke an hour and three-quarters in defence of the United Irishmen. That he was delighted to find, after so many of them had been immured in dungeons, without trial, that at length the subject had come fairly before the world—and that, instead of being a system of organized treason and murder, it proved to be a great bond of national union, founded upon the most acknowledged principle of law, and every sacred obligation due to our country and Creator.

Mr. Baron George gave his opinion decidedly, that the obligation was, under the act of Parliament, *illegal*. The jury withdrew, and acquitted the prisoners, and thus ended the Assizes of Armagh.

The "Union" continued to recruit its numbers in the North; but with still greater secrecy, and the country remaining perfectly tranquil, notwithstanding the cruel outrages of magistrates and military, trade somewhat revived, and most people seemed to be returning peacefully to their ordinary pursuits. In short,



the United Irish of Ulster were resolved not to rise until they should be at least assured of the co-operation of the other three provinces, if not of aid from France. A report of the "Secret Committee" of the Commons, made this summer, congratulated the country upon this apparent decline in the treasonable spirit. Such, the Committee stated, had been the beneficial consequences of the "measures adopted in the year 1797"—that is, of the rigours of martial law, searches for arms, burnings of houses, and slaughters of women and children. We have already seen, however, that the greater tranquillity and good order of the North arose precisely from the spread of this very "treason" which the Committee pretended to regard as being itself the only disturbance. This Committee goes on to report, that the leaders of the *treason*, apprehensive lest the enemy might be discouraged from any further plan of invasion by the loyal disposition manifested throughout Munster and Connaught on their former attempt, determined to direct all their exertions to the propagation of the system in those provinces which had hitherto been but partially infected. With this view, emissaries were sent into the South and West in great numbers, of whose success in forming new societies and administering the oaths of the Union there were, in the course of some few months, but too evident proofs in the introduction of the same disturbances and enormities in Munster with which the northern province had been so severely visited.

In May, 1797, although numbers had been sworn both in Munster and Leinster, the strength of the organization, exclusive of Ulster, lay chiefly in the metropolis, and in the neighbouring counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Westmeath, and the King's County. It was very observable that the counties in which Defenderism had prevailed easily became converts to the new doctrines; and in the summer of 1797 the usual concomitants of *this species of treason*, namely, the plundering houses of arms, the fabrication of pikes, and the murder of those who did not join their party, began to appear in the midland counties.

"In order to engage the peasantry in the southern counties, particularly in the counties of Waterford and Cork, the more eagerly in their cause, the United Irishmen found it expedient in urging their general principles, to dwell with peculiar energy on the *supposed oppressiveness of tithes*, which had been the pretext for the old *White Boys'* insurrections. And it is observable that, in addition to the acts of

violence usually resorted to by the party for the furtherance of their purposes, the ancient practice of burning the corn and houghing the cattle of those *against whom their resentment was directed* was revived, and very generally practised in those counties.

"With a view to excite the resentment of the Catholics, and to turn that resentment to the purposes of the party, fabricated and false tests were represented as having been taken to *exterminate Catholics*, and were industriously disseminated by the emissaries of the treason throughout the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. Reports were frequently circulated amongst the ignorant of the Catholic persuasion that large bodies of men were coming to put them to death. This fabrication, however extravagant and absurd, was one among the many wicked means by which the deluded peasantry were engaged the more rapidly and deeply in the treason."\*

So far the Committee; and this document is but one of many examples of legislative slander at the time, and of histories written by "loyal men" since. The report classes under the same head of "enormities" the fabrication of pikes and the murder of those who did not join their party. It is true the United Irishmen did everywhere get pikes forged, but utterly untrue that they did in any instance murder any one for not joining them. As for "burning the corn and houghing the cattle of those against whom their resentment was directed," it is true that the "supposed oppressiveness of tithes" and of church rates had for many years been the occasion of such acts of outrage against tithe proctors, &c., but quite untrue that outrages of this kind, or any other kind, increased when the United Irish Societies spread into the midland and southern counties. On the contrary, they diminished. We have already seen the strong testimony to this effect in the North; and it may be laid down as universally true, that the Irish people, on the eve of an insurrection or in any violent political excitement, are always free from crime to a most exemplary extent; which is always considered an alarming symptom by the authorities.

"The good effects of the United Irish system in the commencement," says Miles Byrne,† "were soon felt and seen through-

\* Plowden.

† The excellent, chivalrous Miles Byrne, who died only in 1852, a *Chef-de-Bataillon* in the French service, was one of the first United Irishmen in Wexford County. His *Memoirs*, edited by his widow, and



out the Counties of Wexford, Carlow, and Wicklow, which were the parts of the country I knew best. *It gave the first alarm to the Government*; they suspected something extraordinary was going on, finding that disputes, fighting at fairs and other places of public meeting, had completely ceased. The magistrates soon perceived this change, as they were now seldom called on to grant summons or warrants to settle disputes. Drunkenness ceased also; for an United Irishman to be found *drunk* was unknown for many months. . . . Such was the sanctity of our cause.\* Even Mr. Plowden, though an enemy of the United Irishmen, and ready enough to call them *miscreants* for their "treason," is obliged to vindicate them from the charges of encouraging or favouring other kinds of crime. But it is true, that if it be an "enormity" to "fabricate pikes," they were guilty of that atrocity.

So much, it is right to say, in vindication of as pure, gallant, and self-sacrificing a political party as ever appeared in any country under the sun.

As for the last-cited statement in the Committee's report, it was most accurately true that large bodies of men were at that moment "coming to put them (the Catholics) to death." Twelve English and Scottish militia regiments, besides an immense force of the regular army, were coming, or already come, for that express purpose; which purpose was also carried into effect upon a very great scale. And it was most natural, therefore, that those Catholics should be urged to *unite* for their own defence with those of their countrymen who were objects of the same conspiracy; namely, the Society of United Irishmen.

When this monstrous report was presented in the House of Commons, there was naturally some debate. Mr. Fletcher

published in New York and in Paris in 1863, form one of the most valuable documents for the history of his time, and the insurrection in Wexford.

\* The question at one time much agitated—whether the United Irishmen, or any of them, did or did not theoretically hold *tyrannicide*, that is, political assassination, to be lawful, is nothing to the purpose; it is enough to know they never practised it, and their leaders professed their abhorrence of it. Singular to say, the only United Irishman who ever by any writing of his, gave even a pretext for such an imputation, was the gentle poet who sings "The Loves of the Angels," and "The last Rose of Summer." A letter of his, when a student in Trinity College, signed *Sophister*, contains some rhetoric of that sort; and resolutions written by him and offered in one of the U.I. Clubs in College, were the chief occasion of Lord Clare's celebrated *Visitation* to the University; but Lord Clare himself admitted that the resolution *advising tyrannicide* had been rejected.

said, that if coercive measures were to be pursued, the whole country must be coerced, for the spirit of insurrection had pervaded every part of it.

Mr. M. Beresford ordered the clerk to take down these words, and the gallery was instantly cleared. When strangers were again admitted, the debate on the address still continued, and in the course of it M. J. C. Beresford thought himself called on to defend the Secret Committee against an assertion which had fallen from Mr. Fletcher in the course of his speech. The assertion was, in substance, that he feared the people would be led to look on the report of the Committee as fabricated rather to justify the past measures of Government than to state facts.

One statement, however, in the report was true—that during this summer the United Irish system did strike vigorous roots in all the Counties of Leinster, except, perhaps, Kilkenny. It has been affirmed that Wexford, which soon made the most formidable figure in the insurrection, had so few United Irishmen within its bounds up to the end of the year 1797, as not to be counted at all in the official returns of the organized counties in February; and it is probable that as the peasantry of Wexford were comparatively comfortable and thrifty, and lived on good terms with their landlords, there was less disposition to rush into insurrectionary organizations at first. Yet Miles Byrne, who was himself sworn in an United Irishman in the summer of 1797, tells us: "Before a month had elapsed, almost every one had taken the test." He adds: "We soon organized parochial and baronial meetings, and named delegates to correspond with the county members Robert Graham, of Corcannon, a cousin my mother's, was named to represent the county at the meeting to be held in Dublin at Oliver Bond's." Whatever may have been the case in Wexford, it is certain that Kildare, Carlow, Meath, and Dublin, were in the course of the summer completely organized. Miles Byrne says: "Nothing could exceed the readiness and good will of the United Irishmen to comply with the instructions they received to procure arms, ammunition, &c., notwithstanding the difficulties and perils they underwent in purchasing those articles. Pikes were easily had at this time, for almost every blacksmith was a United Irishman. The pike-blades were soon had, but it was more difficult to procure poles for them; and the cutting down of young ash trees for that purpose awoke great attention and caused great suspicion of the object in view." It is certain, how-



ever, that the county of Wexford neither suffered so much, nor was so ripe for insurrection, as many other counties, until after the 1st of April, 1798, when Lord Castlereagh's "well-timed measures" were taken. In the meantime Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the other leaders were eagerly and impatiently awaiting news of approaching succours from France; keeping the people as quiet as possible, and letting them prepare their arms and steel their hearts, in full view of the corpses blackening upon many a gibbet, and heads impaled on spikes over many a gaol doorway, for the crime of swearing to promote the union of Irishmen, in order to obtain a full and fair representation of the people,\* and deliverance from their savage oppressors.

### CHAPTER III.

1797—1798.

Wolfe Tone's Negotiations in France and Holland.—

Lewins.—Expedition of Dutch Government Destined for Ireland.—Tone at the Texel.—His Journal.—Tone's uneasiness about Admitting Foreign Dominion over Ireland.—MacNeven's Memoir.—Discussion as to Proper Point for a Landing.—Tone on Board the *Vryheid*.—Adverse Winds.—Rage and Impatience of Tone.—Disastrous Fate of the Batavian Expedition.—Camperdown.

THE great French armament, destined for the liberation of Ireland, which had looked in at Bantry Bay, had returned to Brest, without so much loss by the bad weather as might have been expected, and without having met a single British ship-of-war. The frigate *Fraternité*, carrying General Hoche and the Admiral Morand de Galles, arrived safely at La

\* It is right to bear in mind throughout, that the original test of the United Irish Society, which bound them to unite to procure fair representation of all the Irish people in *Parliament*, was changed in 1795 into an engagement to unite for the purpose of obtaining a fair representation of all the people—dropping the words "*in Parliament*." From that time, separation and a Republican Government became the fixed objects of the principal leaders, but not the avowed ones till a little later, when, at the conclusion of every meeting, the chairman was obliged to inform the members of each society, "they had undertaken no light matter," and he was directed to ask every delegate present what were his views and his understanding of those of his society, and each individual was expected to reply, "a Republican Government and a separation from England."—*Pieces of Irish History*. Madden.

All this was, of course, as well known to the Government as to the members; so that it cannot in candour be said, that the U. I. were treated as criminals for the mere fact of uniting—it was for uniting to destroy British dominion in Ireland, and erect a republic in its place.

Rochelle a fortnight after. Hoche was appointed to the command of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse; and Theobald Wolfe Tone went with him, attached to his personal staff. A great mutual regard seems to have sprung up between the young General and his gallant *Aide* and the latter, who had by no means given up the project of a French liberating invasion of Ireland, always cherished the hope of seeing Hoche appointed to the chief command. On the 10th of March, he writes to his wife: "This very day the Executive Directory has ratified the nomination of General Hoche, and I am, to all intents and purposes, Adjutant-General, destined for the Army of Sambre and Meuse."

In the end of May, after a short stay with his family, who had arrived in France, we find him at Cologne, at the headquarters of that army. In the meantime, Mr. John Edward Lewins, already mentioned as an agent of the United Irishmen, had arrived in France, empowered to treat for another expedition, and to negotiate a loan. When Lewins arrived in Holland, then called the "Batavian Republic," one of the republics dependent upon France, and at war with England, he found the Government very well disposed to essay this bold enterprise of a descent upon Ireland, and to risk their whole navy and army in the effort. An extract from Tone's journal will now afford the best insight into the state of this negotiation. While with General Hoche, at his *Quartier General*, at Friedberg, he writes, under date of June 12th, 1797.—

"This evening the General called me into the garden and told me he had some good news for me. He then asked, 'Did I know one Lewins?' I answered I did, perfectly well, and had a high opinion of his talents and patriotism. 'Well,' said he, 'he is at Neuwied, waiting to see you; you must set off to-morrow morning; when you join him, you must go together to Treves, and wait for further orders. The next morning I set off, and, on the 14th, in the evening reached—

"June 14th, *Neuwied*; where I found Lewins waiting for me. I cannot express the unspeakable satisfaction I felt at seeing him. I gave him a full account of all my labours, and of everything that had happened since I have been in France, and he informed me, in return, of everything of consequence relating to Ireland, and especially to my friends now in jeopardy there.

"June 17th, *Treves*; where we arrived on the 17th. What is most material is, that



he is sent here by the Executive Committee of the United People of Ireland, to solicit, on their part, the assistance in troops, arms, and money, necessary to enable them to take the field, and assert their liberty; the organization of the people is complete, and nothing is wanting but the point d'appui. His instructions are to apply to France, Holland, and Spain. At Hamburgh, where he passed almost two months, he met a Senor Nava, an officer of rank in the Spanish navy, sent thither by the Prince of Peace, on some mission of consequence; he opened himself to Nava, who wrote off, in consequence, to his court, and received an answer, general, it is true, but in the highest degree favourable; a circumstance which augurs well is, that in forty days from the date of Nava's letter he received the answer, which is less time than he ever knew a courier to arrive in, and shows the earnestness of the Spanish Minister. Lewins' instructions are to demand of Spain £500,000 sterling, and 30,000 stand of arms. At Treves, on the 19th, Dalton, the General's Aide-de-Camp, came express with orders for us to return to—

“*June 21st, Coblenz*; where we arrived on the 21st, and met General Hoche. He told us that, in consequence of the arrival of Lewins, he had sent off Simons, one of his Adjutant-Generals, who was of our late expedition, in order to press the Executive Directory and Minister of the Marine; that he had also sent copies of all the necessary papers, including especially those lately prepared by Lewins, with his own observations, enforcing them in the strongest manner; that he had just received the answers of all parties, which were as favourable as we could desire; but that the Minister of the Marine was absolutely for making the expedition on a grand scale, for which two months, at the very least, would still be necessary; to which I, knowing Brest of old, and that two months, in the language of the Marine, meant four at least, if not five or six, remarked the necessity of an immediate exertion in order to profit by the state of mutiny and absolute disorganization in which the English navy is at this moment, in which Lewins heartily concurred; and we both observed that *it was not a strong military force* that we wanted at this moment, but arms and ammunition, with troops sufficient to serve as a *noyau de armee*, and protect the people in their first assembling; adding, that 5,000 men sent now, when the thing was feasible, would be far better than 25,000 in three months, when perhaps we might find ourselves again blocked up in

Brest Harbour; and I besought the General to remember that the mutiny aboard the English fleet would most certainly be soon quelled, so that there was not a moment to lose; that if we were lucky enough to arrive in Ireland before that took place, I looked upon it as morally certain that, by proper means, we might gain over the seamen, who have already spoken of steering the fleet into the Irish harbour, and so settle the business, perhaps without striking a blow. We both pressed these and such other arguments as occurred, in the best manner we were able; to which General Hoche replied, he saw everything precisely in the same light we did, and that he would act accordingly, and press the Directory and Minister of the Marine in the strongest manner. He showed Lewins Simons' letter, which contained the assurance of the Directory ‘that they would make no peace with England wherein the interests of Ireland should not be fully discussed agreeably to the wishes of the people of that country.’ This is a very strong declaration, and has most probably been produced by a demand made by Lewins in his memorial, ‘that the French Government should make it an indispensable condition of peace, that all the British troops should be withdrawn from Ireland, and the people left at full liberty to declare whether they wished to continue the connection with England or not.’ General Hoche then told us not to be discouraged by the arrival of a British negotiator, for that the Directory were determined to make no peace but on conditions which would put it out of the power of England longer to arrogate to herself the commerce of the world, and dictate her laws to all the maritime powers. He added that preparations were making also in Holland for an expedition, the particulars of which he would communicate to us in two or three days, and, in the meantime, desired us to attend him to—

“*June 24th, Cologne*; for which place we set off; arrived the 24th.”

“*June 25th.*—At nine o'clock at night the General sent us a letter from General Daendels, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Batavian Republic, acquainting him that everything was in the greatest forwardness, and would be ready in a very few days; that the army and the navy were in the best possible spirits; that the Committee for Foreign Affairs (the Directory per interim of the Batavian Republic) desired most earnestly to see him without loss of time, in order to to make the definite arrangements; and especially they prayed him to bring with



him the deputy of the people of Ireland, which Daendels repeated two or three times in his letter. In consequence of this, I waited on the General, whom I found in his bed in the Court Imperiale, and received his orders to set off with Lewins without loss of time, and attend him at—

“*June 27th, the Hague*; where we arrived accordingly, having travelled day and night. In the evening we went to the Comedie, where we met the General in a sort of public incognito; that is to say, he had combed the powder out of his hair, and was in a plain regimental frock. After the play, we followed him to his lodgings at the Lion d’or, where he gave us a full detail of what was preparing in Holland. He began by telling us that the Dutch Governor-General Daendels and Admiral Dewinter were sincerely actuated by a desire to effectuate something striking to rescue their country from that state of oblivion and *decadence* into which it had fallen; that by the most indefatigable exertions on their part, they had got together, at the Texel, sixteen sail of the line, and eight or ten frigates, all ready for sea, and in the highest condition; that they intended to embark 15,000 men, the whole of their national troops, 3000 stand of arms, 80 pieces of artillery, and money for their pay, and subsistence for three months; that he had the best opinion of the sincerity of all parties, and of the courage and conduct of the General and Admiral, but that here was the difficulty: The French Government had demanded that at least 5000 French troops, the *elite* of the army, should be embarked, instead of a like number of Dutch; in which case, if the demand was acceded to, he would himself take the command of the united army, and set out for the Texel directly; but that the Dutch Government made great difficulties, alleging a variety of reasons, of which some were good; that they said the French troops would never submit to the discipline of the Dutch navy, and that, in that case, they could not pretend to enforce it on their own, without making unjust distinctions, and giving a reasonable ground for jealousy and discontent to their army; ‘but the fact is,’ said Hoche, ‘that the Committee, Daendels, and Dewinter, are anxious that the Batavian Republic should have the whole glory of the expedition, if it succeeds; they feel that their country has been forgotten in Europe, and they are risking everything, even to their last stake—for if this fails they are ruined—in order to restore the national character. The demand of the

French Government is now before the Committee; if it is acceded to, I will go myself, and at all events I will present you both to the Committee; and we will probably then settle the matter definitively.’ Both Lewins and I now found ourselves in a considerable difficulty. On the one side, it was an object of the greatest importance to have Hoche and his 5000 grenadiers; on the other, it was most unreasonable to propose anything which could hurt the feelings of the Dutch people, at a moment when they were making unexampled exertions in our favour, and risking, as Hoche himself said, their last ship and last shilling to emancipate us. I cursed and swore like a dragoon; it went to my very heart’s blood and midriff to give up the General and our brave lads, 5000 of whom I would prefer to any 10,000 in Europe; on the other hand, I could not but see that the Dutch were perfectly reasonable in the desire to have the whole reputation of an affair prepared and arranged entirely at their expense, and at such an expense. I did not know what to say. Lewins, however, extricated himself and me with considerable address. After stating very well our difficulty, he asked Hoche whether he thought that Daendels would serve under his orders, and, if he refused, what effect that might have on the Batavian troops? I will never forget the magnanimity of Hoche on this occasion. He said he believed Daendels would not, and therefore that the next morning he would withdraw the demand with regard to the French troops, and leave the Dutch Government at perfect liberty to act as they thought proper. When it is considered that Hoche has a devouring passion for fame; that his great object, on which he has endeavoured to establish his reputation, is the destruction of the power of England; that he has, for two years, in a great degree, devoted himself to our business, and made the greatest exertions, including our memorable expedition, to emancipate us; that he sees, at last, the business likely to be accomplished by another, and, of course, all the glory he had promised to himself ravished from him; when, in addition to all this, it is considered that he could, by a word’s speaking, prevent the possibility of that rival’s moving one step, and find, at the same time, plausible reasons sufficient to justify his own conduct, I confess his renouncing the situation which he might command is an effort of very great virtue. It is true he is doing exactly what an honest man and a good citizen ought to do; he is preferring the interests of his country to his



own private views—that, however, does not prevent my regarding his conduct in this instance with great admiration, and I shall never forget it. This important difficulty being removed, after a good deal of general discourse on our business, we parted late, perfectly satisfied with each other, and having fixed to wait on the Committee to-morrow in the forenoon. All reflections made, the present arrangement, if it has its dark, has its bright sides also, of which more hereafter.

“ June 28.—This morning at ten, Lewins and I went with General Hoche to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, which we found sitting. There were eight or nine members, of whom I do not know all the names, together with General Daendels. Those whose names I learned were citizens Hahn (who seemed to have great influence among them), Bekker, Van Leyden, and Grasveldt. General Hoche began by stating extremely well the history of our affairs since he had interested himself in them; he pressed, in the strongest manner that we could wish, the advantages to be reaped from the emancipation of Ireland, the almost certainty of success if the attempt were once made, and the necessity of attempting it, if at all, immediately. It was citizen Hahn who replied to him. He said he was heartily glad to find the measure sanctioned by so high an opinion as that of General Hoche; that originally the object of the Dutch Government was to have invaded England in order to have operated a diversion in favour of the French army, which it was hoped would have been in Ireland; that circumstances being totally changed in that regard, they had yielded to the wishes of the French Government, and resolved to go into Ireland; that, for this purpose, they had made the greatest exertions, and had now at the Texel an armament of 16 sail of the line, 10 frigates, 15,000 troops in the best condition, 80 pieces of artillery, and pay for the whole three months; but that a difficulty had been raised within a few days, in consequence of a requisition of the Minister of Marine, Truget, who wished to have 5000 French troops, instead of so many Dutch, to be disembarked in consequence. That this was a measure of extreme risk, inasmuch as the discipline of the Dutch navy was very severe, and such as the French troops would probably not submit to; that, in that case, they could not pretend to enforce it with regard to their own troops, the consequence of which would be a relaxation of all discipline. This was precisely what General Hoche told us last night. He immediately replied that,

such being the case, he would take on himself to withdraw the Minister of Marine, and satisfy the Directory as to the justice of their observations; and that he hoped, all difficulty on that head being removed, they would press the embarkation without a moment's delay. It was easy to see the most lively satisfaction on all their faces at this declaration of General Hoche, which certainly does him the greatest honour. General Daendels, especially, was beyond measure delighted. They told us then that they hoped all would be ready in a fortnight, and Hahn observed, at the same time, that, as there was an English squadron which appeared almost every day at the mouth of the Texel, it was very much to be desired that the Brest fleet should, if possible, put to sea, in order to draw off at least a part of the British fleet, because, from the position of the Texel, the Dutch fleet was liable to be attacked in detail, in sailing out of the port; and even if they beat the enemy, it would not be possible to proceed, as they must return to refit. To this General Hoche replied, that the French fleet could not, he understood, be ready before two months, which put it out of the question; and as to the necessity of returning to refit, he observed that, during the last war, the British and French fleets had often fought, both in the East and West Indies, and kept the seas after; all that was necessary being to have on board the necessary articles of *rechange*; besides, it was certainly the business of the Dutch fleet to avoid an action by all possible means. General Daendels observed that Admiral Dewinter desired nothing better than to measure himself with the enemy, but we all, that is to say, General Hoche, Lewins, and myself, cried out against it, his only business being to bring his convoy safe to its destination. A member of the committee, I believe it was Van Leyden, then asked us, supposing everything succeeded to our wish, what was the definite object of the Irish people. To which we replied categorically, that it was to throw off the yoke of England, break forever the connection now existing with that country, and constitute ourselves a free and independent people. They all expressed their satisfaction at this reply, and Van Leyden observed that he had travelled through Ireland, and to judge from the luxury of the rich, and extreme misery of the poor, no country in Europe had so crying a necessity for a revolution. To which Lewins and I replied, as is most religiously the truth, that one great motive of our conduct in this business, was the con-



viction of the wretched state of our peasantry, and the determination, if possible, to amend it. The political object of our visit being now nearly ascertained, Hahn, in the name of the Committee, observed that he hoped either Lewins or I would be of the expedition. To which Hoche replied, 'that I was ready to go,' and he made the offer, on my part, in a manner peculiarly agreeable to my feelings. It was then fixed that I should set off for the army of Sambre et Meuse for my trunk, and especially for my papers, and that Lewins should remain at the Hague, at the orders of the Committee, until my return, which might be seven or eight days. The meeting then broke up. We could not possibly desire to find greater attention to us, personally, or, which was far more important, greater zeal and anxiety to forward this expedition, in which the Dutch Government has thrown itself '*a corps perdu*.' They venture no less than the whole of their army and navy. As Hoche expressed it, 'they are like a man stripped to his breeches, who has one shilling left, which he throws in the lottery, in the hope of being enabled to buy a coat.'

The mutations of history are sometimes strange. Here, in 1797, we find the Dutch nation preparing for a grand national effort to liberate and redeem the very same people whom a century before it had so powerfully contributed, with the Prince of Orange and its "Dutch Blues," to hurl prostrate under the feet of this very England which the Dutch Republic was now so eager to overthrow.

It deserves to be noticed, in justice to the Irish agents both in Holland and in France, that they never contemplated bringing an overwhelming force to Ireland, such as might subdue the country to hold it in a state of subjection to France, like the Ligurian or Cisalpine Republic. The "Secret Committee," already so often cited, which had under examination Messrs. Emmet, MacNeven, and O'Connor, admit this fact. "It appeared to the Committee that the Executive of the Union, though desirous of obtaining assistance in men, arms, and money, yet were averse to a greater force being sent than might enable them to subvert the Government and retain the power of the country in their own hands; but that the French showed a decided disinclination at all times to send any force to Ireland, except such as from its magnitude might not only give them the hopes of conquering the kingdom, but of retaining it afterwards as a French conquest, and of subjecting it to all the plunder and oppres-

sions which other nations, subdued or deceived by that nation, had experienced." In Tone's journal, under date of 1st of July, occurs a passage showing how earnestly that true Irishman deprecated a French conquest of his country: "I then took occasion to speak on a subject which had weighed very much upon my mind—I mean the degree of influence which the French might be disposed to arrogate to themselves in Ireland, and which I had great reason to fear would be greater than we might choose to allow them. In the *Gazette* of that day, there was a proclamation of Buonaparte's, addressed to the Government of Genoa, which I thought most grossly improper and indecent as touching on the indispensable rights of the people. I read the most obnoxious passages to Hoche, and observed that, if Buonaparte commanded in Ireland, and were to publish there so indiscreet a proclamation, it would have a most ruinous effect; that in Italy such dictation might pass, but never in Ireland, where we understood our rights too well to submit to it. Hoche answered me, 'I understand you, but you may be at ease in that respect; Buonaparte has been my scholar, but he shall never be my master.'"

Before proceeding to narrate the fortunes of this second grand expedition bound for Ireland, it will be well to consider the views of those Irishmen who had studied the subject with regard to a point then extremely interesting, and which may again become interesting in the course of human events—namely, the most advisable or convenient harbours of Ireland for purposes of a landing hostile to England. This question is treated at length in a memoir, which was, during this same summer, intrusted to Dr. MacNeven, and was by him carried over to France, in order that no such blunder might again be made as the approach to the desolate mountainous coasts of Bear and Bantry. This memoir, singular to relate, fell into the hands of the British Government; but certainly not through any treachery on the part of Dr. MacNeven, who was a most excellent man; but O'Connor, Emmet, and MacNeven tell us, in their memoirs, that on their examination before the Secret Committee of the Lords the next year, they were astonished beyond measure to see the very original of that memoir lying on the table—so perfect was the spy system of England, both at home and abroad, maintained by an enormous expenditure of Secret Service money."

The account which the Secret Committee has given us of that memoir is as



follows:—The next communication of consequence was in June, 1797, when an accredited person went from hence to communicate with the French Directory by their desire; he went by Hamburg, where he saw the French Minister, who had made some difficulty about granting a passport, and demanded a memorial, which was written by the accredited person, and given to the French Minister under the impression that the passport was not to be granted.

The memoir was written in English, and contained the objects of his mission according to the instructions which he had received from the Executive. It began by stating that the appearance of the French in Bantry Bay, had encouraged the least confident of the Irish in the hope of throwing off the yoke of England with the assistance of France; that the event of that expedition had proved the facility of invading Ireland; that in the event of a second expedition, if the object were to take Cork, Oyster Haven would be the best place of debarkation; that the person who had been before accredited was instructed to point out Oyster Haven as the best place of debarkation; and it stated the precautions which had been taken, by throwing up works at Bantry, Fermoy, and Mallow. It further stated, that the system of the United Irishmen had made a rapid progress in the County of Cork, and that Bandon was become a second Belfast; that the system had made great progress in other counties, and that the people were now well inclined to assist the French; that 150,000 United Irishmen were organized and enrolled in Ulster, a great part of them regimented, and one-third ready to march out of the province. It detailed the number of the King's forces in Ulster, and their stations; recommended Loughswilly as a place of debarkation in the North, and stated that the people in the peninsula of Donegal would join the French. It stated, also, the strength of the garrison in Londonderry, and that one regiment which made a part of it was supposed to be disaffected. It mentioned Killybegs also as a good place of debarkation, and stated that the Counties of Tyrone, Fermanagh, and Monaghan, were amongst the best affected to the cause. In case of a landing at Killybegs, it recommended a diversion in Sligo, and stated, that a force of 10,000 United Irishmen might be collected to fall upon Enniskillen, which commanded the pass of Lough Erne; that it was easy to enter the Bay of Galway, but very difficult to get out of it; that the Counties of Louth, Armagh, Westmeath, King's County, and

City of Dublin, were the best organized; that the Catholic priests had ceased to be alarmed at the calumnies which had been propagated of French irreligion, and were well affected to the cause; that some of them had rendered great service in propagating with discreet zeal the system of the Union. It declared that the people of Ireland had a lively sense of gratitude to France for the part which she took, and also to Spain for the interest she took in the affairs of Ireland. It engaged on the part of the National Directory, to reimburse the expenses of France in the expedition which had failed, and of another to be undertaken. The number of troops demanded was a force not exceeding 10,000, and not less than 5000 men. It stated that a brigade of English artillery had been already sent over, and that a large body of troops would probably be sent if Ireland were attacked. A considerable quantity of artillery and ammunition, with a large staff, and a body of engineers, and as many Irish officers as possible, whose fidelity they were assured of were demanded as necessary to accompany the expedition. A recommendation was given to separate the Irish seamen who were prisoners of war from the British, supposing they would be ready to join in an expedition to liberate their country. It further recommended a proclamation to be published by the French General, on his arrival there, that the French came as allies to deliver the country, not to conquer it; it also recommended to the Directory to make the independence of Ireland an indispensable condition of the treaty of peace then pending; and stated that a proceeding so authentic could not be disguised or misrepresented, and would very much encourage the people of Ireland. It contained also an assurance, that the Irish Militia would join the French if they landed in considerable force.\*

The difficulty in the way of the Batavian expedition being removed, by the generous self-abnegation of General Hoche (though his heart was set upon this service), great activity was exerted to make everything ready. Tone was to accompany the Dutch force, with the same rank which he held in the French. What greatly increased the hopes and spirits of Tone and his allies, was the famous "Mutiny

\* The topographical researches into the capabilities of harbours for invasion, must be much facilitated by the many excellent maps of Ireland published within these last few years; some of which also afford a very perfect idea of the nature of the country inland. At the period spoken of in the text, the best map of Ireland was, perhaps, that of Beaumont, a very useless one for strategical purposes.



of the Nore," on board the English fleet, off the mouth of the Thames, which threatened for a few weeks to disable completely the naval power of England. The mutiny, however, was with some difficulty quelled by some sanguinary punishments, and also by increasing the pay of the seamen; so that the British Channel Fleet was ready for service again, as the Dutch soon found out to their cost. On the 4th of July, we find Wolfe Tone at the Hague, ready to undertake his duties. We copy the following extracts from Tone's Journal:—

"*July 4th.*—Instantly on my arrival I waited on General Daendels, whom I found on the point of setting out for the Texel. He read the letter, and told me everything should be settled with regard to my rank, and that I should receive two months pay in advance, to equip me for the campaign. His reception of me was extremely friendly. I staid with Lewins, at the Hague, three or four days, whilst my regimentals, &c., were making up, and at length, all being ready, we parted, he setting off for Paris, to join General Hoche, and I for the Texel, to join General Daendels.

"*July 8th.*—Arrived early in the morning at the Texel, and went immediately on board the Admiral's ship, the *Vryheid*, of 74 guns, a superb vessel. Found General Daendels aboard, who presented me to Admiral Dewinter, who commands the expedition. I am exceedingly pleased with both one and the other; there is a frankness and candour in their manners which is highly interesting.

"*July 10th.*—I have been boating about the fleet, and aboard several of the vessels; they are in very fine condition, incomparably better than the fleet at Brest, and I learn from all hands that the best possible spirit reigns in both soldiers and sailors. Admiral Duncan, who commands the English fleet off the Texel, sent in yesterday an officer with a flag of truce, apparently with a letter, but in fact to reconnoitre our force. Dewinter was even with him; for he detained his messenger, and sent back the answer by an officer of his own, with instructions to bring back an exact account of the force of the enemy.

"*July 11th.*—This day our flag of truce is returned, and the English officer released. Duncan's fleet is of eleven sail of the line, of which three are three-deckers."

When both fleet and army were quite ready, by some fatality similar to that which delayed the Brest fleet before, the wind set in steadily in an adverse direc-

tion, and so continued day after day, week after week.\* During the whole of the two months of July and August the departure was postponed; the supplies put on board the fleet were nearly exhausted, and it was known that Admiral Duncan, who cruised outside, had been reinforced considerably. Changes of plan were proposed, and England or Scotland was to be the object of the attempt, not Ireland. When General Daendels mentioned these new projects to Wolfe Tone, the latter became seriously alarmed. He says in his journal: "These are, most certainly, very strong reasons, and, unfortunately, the wind gives them every hour fresh weight. I answered, that I did not see at present any solid objection to propose to his system, and that all I had to say, was, that if the Batavian Republic sent but a corporal's guard to Ireland, I was ready to make one. So here is our expedition in a hopeful way. It is most terrible. Twice, within nine months, has England been saved by the wind. It seems as if the very elements had conspired to perpetuate our slavery, and protect the insolence and oppression of our tyrants. What can I do at this moment? Nothing. The people of Ireland will now lose all spirit and confidence in themselves and their chiefs, and God only knows whether, if we were even able to effectuate a landing with 3000 men, they might act with courage and decision."

In the interval of waiting at the Texel, two additional agents of the Irish Union made their appearance in Holland. These were Tennant and Lowry; with instructions to make sure, if possible, of some effectual aid, either from France or Holland. They put themselves at once into communication with Tone and Lewins. Nothing seemed immediately possible in that direction, at least until after this Dutch armament should be definitely given up, and the Batavian authorities were very reluctant to give it up. General Daendels charged Tone with a mission to the headquarters of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, in order to confer

\* It is painful to see how Tone's fiery spirit, already irritated by disappointment, chafed at this cruel delay. July 17th, he says in his diary: "I hope the wind will not play us a trick. It is terribly foul this evening. Hang it, and damn it for me! I am in a rage, which is truly astonishing, and can do nothing to help myself. Well! well!"

"*July 18th.*—The wind is as foul as possible this morning; it cannot be worse. Hell! Hell! Hell! Allah! Allah! Allah! I am in a most devouring rage!"

"*July 19th.*—Wind foul still. Horrible! Horrible! Admiral Dewinter and I endeavour to pass away the time, playing the flute, which he does very well; we have some good duets, and that is some relief."



with General Hoche; and when he arrived he found Hoche dying. He writes:—

“*September 18th and 19th.*—My fears with regard to General Hoche were but too well founded. He died this morning at four o'clock. His lungs seemed to me quite gone. This most unfortunate event has so confounded and distressed me that I know not what to think, nor what will be the consequences. Wrote to my wife and to General Daendels instantly.”

Tone evidently believed that Dewinter's Dutch fleet would never sail at all; therefore, after the death of Hoche, he obtained leave to go to Paris, where he was to meet his wife and children.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the loss which the Irish cause in France sustained in the death of General Hoche. He had thoroughly made that cause his own, through his warm admiration for his Irish *aide*, as well as from his settled conviction, formed on military principles, that to strike England in Ireland is the surest and easiest way to destroy her power. It is now known that Napoleon Buonaparte, then the rival of Hoche, came afterwards to entertain strongly this opinion concerning Ireland, although, unfortunately, he was not then duly impressed with its importance. At St. Helena, he said of Hoche, that “he was one of the first of French generals;” and that if he had landed in Ireland he would have succeeded in the great enterprise. And if he had but lived another year, his influence might have availed to direct upon the coast of Ireland that fine fleet and army which made the unavailing and disastrous invasion of Egypt.

While Tone seems to have abandoned every hope of decisive action on the part of the Batavian Republic, a sudden resolution was taken at the Hague. In the beginning of October, the British Commander quitted his station, and went to Yarmouth Roads to refit. A peremptory order was despatched by the Dutch Government to Admiral Dewinter to put to sea. On the morning of the 11th of October, Duncan, having made great haste, came in view of the Dutch fleet near the coast of Holland, off a place called Camperdown. The two fleets were nearly equal in number of ships, but the English were much superior in weight of metal. Dewinter, seeing a battle inevitable, engaged with the utmost gallantry. After a bloody fight, which the Dutch sustained with an intrepidity approaching desperation, Dewinter's ship struck a sinking wreck. Ten Dutch ships of the line and two frigates were captured; Duncan became

Lord Camperdown; and there was an end of Holland as a great naval power.

Thus there was, and continued to be, a strange fatality dooming the hopes of Ireland in foreign aid to a series of painful disappointments. There were, after this, two more expeditions, on a small scale, both French, and both intended to aid the Irish insurrection. As for the “Army of England,” which began to be formed in this very month of October, it is needless to enter into the detail of that operation, as it was really never intended for England at all, still less for Ireland. Napoleon Buonaparte was made Commander-in-Chief. While there was apparently busy preparation in the Channel ports of France, Wolfe Tone was in the highest spirits; and had several interviews with the conqueror of Italy, who seemed bent at last upon the grand enterprise of going straight to London, promised Tone that he should be employed in the expedition, and requested him to make out a list of the leading Irish refugees then in Paris, who “would all,” he said, “be undoubtedly employed.” So passed the winter and the spring. Two passages from Tone's journal will tell all that is needful to be told of the *Armée d'Angleterre*:—

“*May 19th.*—I do not know what to think of our expedition. It is certain that the whole left wing of the Army of England is at this moment in full march back to the Rhine; Buonaparte is God knows where, and the clouds seem thickening more and more in Germany, where I have no doubt Pitt is moving heaven and hell to embroil matters, and divert the storm which was almost ready to fall on his head.

“*May 24th and 25th.*—It is certain that Buonaparte is at Toulon, and embarked since the 14th; his speech, as I suspected, is not as it was given in the last journals. The genuine one I read to-day, and there are two sentences in it which puzzle me completely. In the first, at the beginning of the address, he tells the troops that they form a wing of the Army of England; in the second, towards the end, he reminds them that they have the glory of the French name to sustain in countries and seas the most distant. What does that mean? Is he going, after all, to India? Will he make a short cut to London by way of Calcutta? I begin foully to suspect it.”

In fact, the expedition to Egypt was already at sea; Tone remained attached to that portion of the “Army of England” which was still quartered in the North of France, and passed his time be-



tween Rouen and Havre; Lewins continued to represent the United Irishmen at Paris with great tact and honesty. But in the meantime Lord Castlereagh had already, by his "judicious measures," caused the premature explosion of the insurrection in Ireland; and the island was now ringing with the combat of Oulart Hill and the storm of Enniscorthy.

## CHAPTER IV.

1798.

Spies.—Secret Service Money.—Press Prosecution.—"Remember Orr!"—Account of Orr.—Curran's Speech.—His Description of Informers.—Arts of Government.—Sowing Dissensions.—Forged Assassination List.—"Union" Declines.—Addresses of "Loyalty."—Maynooth Grant Enlarged.—Catholic Bishops "Loyal"—Forcing a "Premature Explosion."—Camden and Carhampton.—Outrages on the People, to Force Insurrection.—Testimony of Lord Moira.—Inquiry Demanded in Parliament.—Repulsed and Defeated by Clare and Castlereagh.—Insolence and Unlimited Power of Ministers.—General Abercrombie Resigns.—Remarkable General Order.—Pelham Quits Ireland.—Castlereagh's Secretary.—The Hessians' Free Quarters.—The Ancient Britons.—Proclamation of Martial Law.—Grattan's Picture of the Times.—Horrible Atrocities in Wexford.—Massacres.—The Orangemen.—Their Address of Loyalty.—All these Outrages before any Insurrection.

DURING all the time of these negotiations in France, the British Government was most intimately acquainted with everything the United Irishmen were doing or contemplating, by means of great multitudes of spies; many, or most of these spies being themselves sworn members of the United Irish Society; whose business was not only to watch and report, but also to urge on and promote the preparations for insurrection, and who were duly paid at the Castle out of the "Secret Service Money."\* The system of not

merely paying informers for information, but hiring them beforehand to join illegal societies, and there recommend and urge forward the boldest and most illegal counsels, in order to betray their trusting confederates, is a system peculiar to the British Government in Ireland; and not paralleled in atrocity and baseness by anything known to us in the functions of a French or Austrian police. During the whole year 1797 this "battalion of testimony" was in a state of high organization and efficiency; and greatly aided in causing the insurrection to burst out at the very day and hour when the Castle wished for it. It would be an endless task to recount all the oppressions which in the latter part of this year goaded the people at last to seek a remedy in desperate resistance; but the case of Orr is too remarkable and notorious to be passed over.

A prosecution was instituted against the *Press* newspaper in 1798, for seditious libel on Lord Camden's Government, contained in certain letters which appeared in that paper in the latter part of 1797. The subject matter of the libel in the *Press*, signed MARCUS (for the publication of which the printer was prosecuted by the Government), was the refusal of Lord Camden to extend mercy to a person of the name of William Orr, of respectability, and remarkable for his popularity, who had been capitally convicted at Carrickfergus of administering the oath of the United Irishmen's Society, and was the first person who had been so convicted. Poems were written, sermons were preached; after-dinner speeches, and after supper still stronger speeches were made, of no ordinary vehemence, about the fate of Orr and the conduct of Lord Camden, which certainly, in the peculiar circumstances of this case, was bad, or rather stupidly base and odiously unjust.

The scribes of the United Irishmen wrote up the memory of the man whom Camden had allowed to be executed with a full knowledge of the foul means taken to obtain a conviction, officially conveyed to him by persons every way worthy of credit and of undoubted loyalty.

The evident object of the efforts to make this cry, "*Remember Orr*," stir up the people to rebellion, cannot be mistaken—that object was to single out an individual case of suffering in the cause of the Union, for the sympathy of the nation, and to turn that sympathy to the account of the cause. Orr's case presented to the people of Ireland, at that period, a few extraordinary features of

\* Dr. Madden has procured and published the accounts of this important branch of the public service for 1797-8. These spies were of all grades of society, and their functions were very various. Some, like Reynolds and Armstrong, men of education and position, were to associate with the leaders, and carry all their secrets to the Castle; others, like James O'Brien, were to foment treasons in public houses, and swear away at assizes the lives of those who trusted them. The record is a very curious one; and it may be some satisfaction to us, that if our country has been always bought and sold for money, we can at least examine and check the accounts, and estimate with considerable accuracy the money value of a traitor (or "loyal man"), according to his talents and opportunities. For seventy years past, it has cost the treasury heavily to purchase "loyal men" in Ireland, from Reynolds down to Nagle.



iniquity and of injustice. He was a noted, active, and popular country member of the society of United Irishmen. He was executed on account of the notoriety of that circumstance, not on account of the sufficiency of the evidence or the justice of the conviction that was obtained against him; for the crown witness, Wheatly, immediately after the trial, acknowledged that he had perjured himself; and some of the jury came forward likewise and admitted that they were drunk when they gave their verdict; and these facts, duly deposed to and attested, were laid before the viceroy, Lord Camden, by Sir John Macartney, the magistrate who had caused Orr to be arrested, and who, to his honour be it told, when he found the practices that had been resorted to, used every effort, though fruitlessly, to move Lord Camden to save the prisoner.

William Orr, of Ferranshane, in the county of Antrim, was charged with administering the United Irishman's oath, in his own house, to a soldier of the name of Wheatly. He was the first person indicted under the act which made that offence a capital felony (36 Geo. III.) His father was a small farmer, in comfortable circumstances, and the proprietor of a bleach-green. James Hope, who was intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, informed Dr. Madden, "that William Orr was not actually the person who administered the oath to the soldier. The person who administered the oath was Wm. M'Keever, a delegate from the city of Derry to the Provincial Committee, who afterwards made his escape to America."

In a letter of Miss M'Cracken, dated 27th of September, 1797, addressed to her brother, then in Kilmainham Jail, is found the following reference to the recent trial of Orr:—"Orr's trial has clearly proved that there is neither justice nor mercy to be expected. Even the greatest aristocrats here join in lamenting his fate; but his greatness of mind renders him an object of envy and of admiration rather than of compassion. I am told that his wife is gone with a letter from Lady Londonderry to her brother on his behalf. . . . You will be surprised when I tell you that old Archibald Thompson, of Cushendall, was foreman of the jury, and it is thought will lose his senses if Mr. Orr's sentence is carried into execution, as he appears already quite distracted at the idea of a person being condemned to die through his ignorance, as it seems he did not at all understand the business of a jurymen. However, he

*held out from the forenoon till six o'clock in the morning* of the day following, though, it is said, he was beaten, and threatened with being *wrecked*, and not left a sixpence in the world, on his refusing to bring in a verdict of guilty. Neither would they let him taste of the supper *and the drink which was sent to the rest, and of which they partook to such a beastly degree*. It was not, therefore, much to be wondered at, that an infirm old man should not have sufficient resolution to hold out against such treatment.

(Signed) "MARY M'CRACKEN."

Orr was defended by Curran and Sampson. The judges before whom he was tried were Lord Yelverton and Judge Chamberlaine. The jury retired at six in the evening *to consider their verdict*. They sat up, *deliberating*, all night, and returned into court at six the following morning. The jury inquired if they might find a qualified verdict as to the prisoner's guilt. The Judge directed them to give a special verdict on the general issue. They retired again, and returned shortly with a verdict of guilty, and a strong recommendation of the prisoner to mercy. Next day, Orr was brought up for judgment, when, after an unsuccessful motion in arrest of judgment chiefly on the grounds of the drunkenness of the jury, which Judge Chamberlaine would not admit of being made "the foundation of any motion to the Court," Yelverton pronounced sentence of death, "in a voice scarcely articulate, and at the conclusion of his address burst into tears." Orr said, pointing to the jury, "*That jury has convicted me of being a felon. My own heart tells me that their conviction is a falsehood, and that I am not a felon. If they have found me guilty improperly, it is worse for them than for me. I can forgive them. I wish to say only one word more, and that is, to declare on this awful occasion, and in the presence of God, that the evidence against me was grossly perjured—grossly and wickedly perjured!*"

The witness, Wheatly, made an affidavit before a magistrate acknowledging his having sworn falsely against Orr. Two of the jury made depositions, setting forth that they had been induced to give a verdict contrary to their opinion, when under the influence of liquor. Two others made statements that they had been menaced by the other jurors with denunciations and the wrecking of their properties, if they did not comply with their wishes.

James Orr, in the *Press Newspaper* of



the 28th of October, 1797, published a statement respecting his interference, with a view of saving his brother's life, to the following effect: "He, James Orr, had been applied to by many gentlemen to get his brother William to make a confession of his guilt, as a condition on which they would use their interest to have his life spared. The high sheriff, Mr. Skeffington, and the sovereign of Belfast, the Rev. Mr. Bristowe, were among the number—the former undertaking to get the Grand Jury to sign a memorial in his favour. James Orr immediately went to his brother, and the latter indignantly refused to make any such confession, for 'he had not been guilty of the crime he was charged with.' James Orr not being able to induce him to sign it, returned to Belfast and wrote out a confession, similar in terms to that required by Skeffington and Bristowe, and *forged* his brother's name. The forged document was then turned to the account it was required for. A respite had been granted; but the weakness of the brother was made instrumental to the death of the prisoner. The shaken verdict of the drunken jury, of the perjured witness, was not suffered to preserve the prisoner. The forged testimony of his guilt was brought against him. The promises under which that document was obtained were forgotten, and thus 'a surreptitious declaration,' swindled from the fears of an afflicted family, was made the instrument to intercept the stream of mercy, and counteract the report of the judge (one of the judges, namely, Yelverton) who tried him." Orr was executed outside of Carrickfergus, on the 14th of October, 1797, in his thirty-first year, solemnly protesting his innocence of the crime laid to his charge.

The act of James Orr might have led the executive into error; but William Orr wrote a letter to Lord Camden, dated the 10th of October, plainly informing his lordship of the forgery committed by his brother, and that the confession imputed to him "was base and false;" but stating if mercy was extended to him, "he should not fail to entertain the most dutiful sense of gratitude for such an act of justice as well as mercy." On the day of the execution, the great body of the inhabitants of Carrickfergus quitted the town, to avoid witnessing the fate of Orr.

A person who visited Orr previously to his trial, speaks of his personal appearance and address as highly prepossessing. His apparel was new and fashionable—there was a remarkable neatness in his attire. The only thing approaching the foppery

of patriotism was a narrow piece of green ribbon round his neck. He was six feet two inches in height, particularly well made—in fact, his person was a model of symmetry, strength and gracefulness. He wore his hair short and well powdered. The expression of his countenance was frank and manly. He possessed a sound understanding, strong affections, and a kindly disposition. In speaking of the state of the country to his visitor, who remarked that the Government was disposed to act in a conciliatory spirit towards the country, he said: "No, no; you may depend upon it that there is some system laid down *which has for its object murder and devastation.*" He added, respecting the treatment of the Dissenters as well as the Catholics, "Irishmen of every denomination must now stand or fall together."

Thus a variety of depositions establishing the drunkenness of the jury and the perjury of Wheatly were laid before the Lord-Lieutenant. One deposition was of the Rev. George Macartney, a magistrate of the County of Antrim, respecting Wheatly's being brought forward by Mr. Kemmis, and on his (Wheatly's) coming into court, relating to Mr. Macartney his having seen a Dissenting clergyman of the name of Eder, whom he had known elsewhere, and was sure he was brought there to invalidate his testimony. Another deposition was that of the clergyman referred to, stating that he had accompanied a brother clergyman, the Rev. A. Montgomery, to visit a sick soldier, apparently deranged, named Wheatly, a Scotchman, who had attempted to commit suicide; that he confessed to Mrs. Huneys, in whose house he then was, that he was in Colonel Durham's regiment, and had committed a murder, which weighed heavily upon his mind, and that he had been instigated to give false evidence against William Orr, of which crime he sincerely repented. A similar deposition, before Lord O'Neil, was made by the Rev. Mr. Montgomery. Two of the jury made depositions respecting their drunkenness. Two others made statements of the menaces that had been used by the other jurors. But all were of no avail. Lord Camden was deaf to all the representations made to him. All the waters of the ocean will not wash away the stain his obduracy on this occasion has left on his character. Better fifty thousand times for his fame it were, if he had never seen Ireland. The fate of Orr lies heavy on the memory of Lord Camden.

The friends of Earl Camden in vain seek to cast the responsibility of this act



on his subordinates in the Irish Government. They say he was a passive instrument in the hands of others. The prerogative of mercy, however, was given to him, and not to them. On the 26th of October, 1797, a letter addressed to Earl Camden appeared in the *Press*, signed MARCUS, ably and eloquently written, but unquestionably libellous, commenting on the conduct of his lordship in this case. Marcus used these words in reference to it: "The death of Mr. Orr, the nation has pronounced one of the most sanguinary and savage acts that has disgraced the laws. Let not the nation be told that you are a passive instrument in the hands of others. If passive you be, then is your office a shadow indeed. If an active instrument, as you ought to be, you did not perform the duty which the law required of you. You did not exercise the prerogative of mercy—that mercy which the law entrusted to you for the safety of the subject. Innocent, it appears, he was. His blood has been shed, and the precedent is awful. . . . Feasting in your castle, in the midst of your myrmidons and bishops, you have little concerned yourself about the expelled and miserable cottager, whose dwelling at the moment of your mirth was in flames, his wife or his daughter suffering violence at the hands of some commissioned ravager, his son agonizing on the bayonet, and his helpless infants crying in vain for mercy. These are lamentations that disturb not the hour of carousal or intoxicated counsels. The constitution has reeled to its centre—Justice herself is not only blind, but drunk, and deaf, like Festus, to the words of soberness and truth.

"Let the awful execution of Mr. Orr be a lesson to all unthinking jurors, and let them cease to flatter themselves that any interest, recommendation of theirs and of the presiding judge, can stop the course of carnage which sanguinary, and, I do not fear to say, unconstitutional, laws have ordered to be loosed. Let them remember that, like Macbeth, the servants of the Crown have waded so far in blood that they find it easier to go on than go back."

Finnerty was found guilty, and sentenced to be imprisoned for two years, to pay a fine of £20, and to give security for future good behaviour for seven years. Mr. Curran's speech in defence of this printer, Finnerty, is a model of bold, impassioned and indignant pleading, which has, perhaps, never been matched since in a court of justice. One passage of this great speech rises above the immediate case of the orator's client,

and gives a bold and true picture of the policy of the Government:—"The learned counsel has asserted that the paper which he prosecutes (the *Press*) is only part of a system formed to misrepresent the state of Ireland and the conduct of its Government. Do you not therefore discover that his object is to procure a verdict to sanction the Parliaments of both countries in refusing all inquiry into your grievances? Let me ask you, then, are you prepared to say, upon your oaths, that those measures of coercion which are daily practised are absolutely necessary, and ought to be continued? It is not upon Finnerty you are sitting in judgment; but you are sitting in judgment upon the lives and liberties of the inhabitants of more than half of Ireland. You are to say that it is a foul proceeding to condemn the Government of Ireland; that it is a foul act, founded in foul motives, and originating in falsehood and sedition; that it is an attack upon the Government under which the people are prosperous and happy; that justice is here administered with mercy; that the statements made in Great Britain are false—are the effusions of party and of discontent; that all is mildness and tranquillity; that there are no burnings, no transportations; that you never travel by the light of conflagrations; that the jails are not crowded month after month, from which prisoners are taken out, not for trial, but for *embarkation*! These are the questions upon which, I say, you must virtually decide.

. . . I tell you, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, it is not with respect to Mr. Orr or Mr. Finnerty that your verdict is now sought; you are called upon, on your oaths, to say that the Government is wise and merciful; the people prosperous and happy; that military law ought to be continued; that the Constitution could not with safety be restored to Ireland; and that the statements of a contrary import by your advocates in either country are libellous and false. I tell you these are the questions; and I ask you if you can have the front to give the expected answer in the face of a community who know the country as well as you do. Let me ask you how you could reconcile with such a verdict the jails, the tenders, the gibbets, the conflagrations, the murders, the proclamations that we hear of every day in the streets, and see every day in the country? What are the processions of the learned counsel himself, circuit after circuit? Merciful God! what is the state of Ireland, and where shall you find the wretched in-



habitant of this land? You may find him, perhaps, in jail, the only place of security—I had almost said of ordinary habitation! If you do not find him there, you may see him flying with his family from the flames of his own dwelling—lighted to his dungeon by the conflagration of his hovel; or you may find his bones bleaching on the green-fields of his country; or you may find him tossing on the surface of the ocean, and mingling his groans with those tempests, less savage than his persecutors, that drift him to a returnless distance from his family and his home, *without charge, or trial, or sentence.*”

When Mr. Curran came to speak of that part of the publication under trial, which stated that informers were brought forward by hopes of remuneration—“Is that,” he said, “a foul assertion? Or will you, upon your oaths, say to the sister country that there are no such abominable instruments of destruction as informers used in the state prosecutions of Ireland? Let me honestly ask you, what do you feel, when in my hearing—when in the face of this audience—you are asked to give a verdict that every man of us, and every man of you, know, by the testimony of your own eyes, to be utterly and absolutely false? I speak not now of the *public proclamation for informers, with a promise of secrecy and extravagant reward.* I speak not of those unfortunate wretches who have been so often transferred from the table to the dock, and from the dock to the pillory. I speak of what your own eyes have seen, day after day, during the progress of this commission, while you attended this court—the number of horrid miscreants who acknowledged, upon their oaths, that they had come from the seat of Government—from the very chambers of the Castle (where they had been worked upon by the fear of death and hope of compensation to give evidence against their fellows), that the mild, the wholesome, and the merciful councils of this Government are holden over those catacombs of living death, where the wretch that is buried a *man* lies till his heart has time to fester and dissolve, and is then dug up a *witness.* Is this a picture created by a hag-ridden fancy, or is it a fact? Have you not seen him, after his resurrection from that tomb, make his appearance upon your table, the image of life and death, and supreme arbiter of both? Have you not marked, when he entered, how the stormy wave of the multitude retired at his approach? Have you not seen how the human heart bowed to the awful supre-

macy of his power in the undissembled homage of deferential horror? How his glance, like the lightening of heaven, seemed to rive the body of the accused, and mark it for the grave, while his voice warned the devoted wretch of woe and death—a death which no innocence can escape, no art elude, no force resist, no antidote prevent! There *was* an antidote—a juror’s oath; but even that adamant chain, which bound the integrity of man to the throne of eternal justice, is solved and molten in the breath which issues from the mouth of the informer. Conscience swings from her moorings; the appalled and affrighted juror speaks what his soul abhors, and consults his own safety in the surrender of the victim—

— Et quæ sibi quisque timebat,  
Unius in miseri exitium conversa tulere.

Informers are worshipped in the temple of justice, even as the Devil has been worshipped by pagans and savages—even so in this wicked country is the informer an object of judicial idolatry—even so is he soothed by the music of human groans—even so is he placated and incensed by the fumes and by the blood of human sacrifices.”

This extraordinary speech of Mr. Curran is not given here as an example of rhetoric. In fact there is no rhetoric in it; his description is but a faint and pale image of the horrible truth; and the informer O’Brien was only one of that immense “battalion of testimony” which was now regularly drilled and instructed at the Castle of Dublin. Through these foul means the administration was kept fully informed of the designs, the force, and the *personnel* of the United Irishmen; it was also enabled, by the same means, to make considerable progress in the grand English policy of sowing dissensions and bad feeling between Catholics and Dissenters. On one side were the honest, tolerant, and self-sacrificing leaders of the United Irish Society endeavouring to heal the animosities of ages, to make the people know and trust one another in order to unite for the common good of their unhappy country. On the other was Mr. Pitt, ably seconded by Lord Clare and by Castlereagh, and their dreadful army of spies and secret emissaries, carrying all over the country and scattering broadcast mysterious rumours of intended massacres and assassinations—industriously renewing all the old stories of the “horrors of the Inquisition” (which, indeed, were never so horrible as the horrors of the penal laws). A paper was even care-



fully circulated purporting to contain a *printed* list of persons marked out for assassination. Lord Moira, in his place in the English House of Lords, produced this document in debate, describing thus: "He held now in his hand a paper printed, the contents of which were too shocking to read; its avowed object was to point out innocent men, by name, to the poniard of assassins. It loaded His Majesty with the most opprobrious epithets, and reviled the English nation with every term of contumely, affirming it to be the duty of every Irishman to wrest from the hands of English ruffians the property which these English ruffians had wrested from their ancestors."

That this pretended list was the production of some of the Castle emissaries, there can be no doubt. The Lord Chancellor of England declared that he believed the list to be a genuine programme of the "horrid conspiracy" then hatching in Ireland. Lord Moira said, in reply: "As to the paper to which the noble and learned lord, and the noble Secretary had alluded, concerning the names of persons who were marked out for future assassination, he confessed, *he suspected it to be an invention to justify or to support the measures* which had been adopted in Ireland, and of which he had already complained. He suspected this the more, because no printer of a newspaper could have had it from any authentic source, for no man concerned in a conspiracy for assassination would communicate the intention of himself and colleagues. He wished to speak of assassins as he felt, with the greatest indignation and abhorrence; but he must also add, that he believed that they originated in Ireland from private malice and revenge, and would do so from any party that happened to be predominant, while the present dreadful system continued. It was not by a general system of terror that it was to be prevented."

It is easy to conceive, however, what fearful use could be made of all these bold forgeries and wild rumours in the hands of the Castle agents, to exasperate the Protestants, create "alarm," and stop the good work of *Union*. From one cause or another, it is evident, that towards the close of the year 1797, the Union rather abated than increased. One unequivocal symptom of its decline was the renovation of dissension between Dissenters and the Catholics in the North. Sir Richard Musgrave, from an anonymous acquaintance, reports that most of the Presbyterians separated from the Papists in the year 1797; some from "principle, some because they doubted

the sincerity of persons in that order; and others, foreseeing that the plot must fail and end in their destruction, took advantage of the proclamation of the 17th of May, and renounced their associates. Numbers withdrew because they doubted of success without foreign assistance. The Presbyterians of the Counties of Down and Antrim, where they are very numerous, and where they are warmly attached to the Union from pure republican principles, thought they could succeed without the Papists."

Mr. Plowden bears nearly the same testimony: "Certain it is," says he, "that the Northern Unionists generally held back from this time; the Protestants of Ulster were originally Scotch, and still retain much of that guarded policy which so peculiarly characterizes the inhabitants of North Britain. Some barbarous murders in different parts of the kingdom were committed; but they do not appear to have been perpetrated by members of the Union, or persons in any manner connected with them. By the report of the Secret Committee, it appears that from the summer of 1797 the disaffected entertained no serious intention of hazarding an effort independent of foreign assistance, until the middle of March. Their policy was to risk nothing so long as their party was gaining strength. Whatever were the immediate cause of the Union's falling off, we find that from the Autumn of 1797 the Roman Catholics, first in the North, and afterwards successively throughout the kingdom, published addresses and resolutions expressive of their horror of the principles of the United Irishmen, and pledging themselves to be loyal and zealous in the defence and support of the King and Constitution. The northern addresses admitted the fact, and lamented that many of Catholic body had been seduced into the Union, and they deprecated the attempts which were made to create dissension amongst persons of different religions. This example was followed by the generality of the Dissenters. If addresses were tests of loyalty, His Majesty had not more loyal subjects throughout the whole extent of the British Empire than the Irish in the beginning of 1798. Scarcely a parish throughout the kingdom, scarcely a dissenting meeting-house, from which an address of loyalty was not issued, signed by the priest or minister of the flock."

The Catholic addresses of which Mr. Plowden speaks were chiefly procured by the influence of the bishops and higher clergy, who were much relied upon at



this time, as well as frequently since, to keep the higher classes of Catholics "loyal" to the English Government. The Catholic College of Maynooth had been incorporated by law in June, 1795, and had been opened in the following October for students. Thus, for the first time, Catholic young men could be educated for the priesthood in their own country without incurring the penalty of death or transportation. The Parliamentary grant, which had amounted to £8000, was increased to £10,000 in February, 1798, on motion of Mr. Secretary Pelham, who undertook in this debate to reply to the furious and foaming declamation of Dr. Duigenan. This was a great step in the way of conciliation; and it is further certain that members of the Government deceived the Catholic bishops by implied promises to complete the emancipation at an early day. Indeed, Dr. Hussey, Bishop of Waterford, in a pastoral of his this year, assures his flock very positively: "The Popery laws are upon the eve of being extinguished for ever; and may no wicked hand ever again attempt to divide this land, by making religious distinctions a mask to divide, to disturb, to oppress it." Thus the bishops and most of the clergy were secured to the English party in the approaching struggle—and by the same treacherous artifice by which they were made generally favourable to the legislative "Union" two years later, namely, by holding out the hope of speedy emancipation. These hopes were disappointed; the promises were broken, and the Catholics suffered under all their disabilities for thirty years longer.

The strength of the United Irish Society then, as we have seen, was in the North in a great measure broken up. In the other provinces it was, however, growing and strengthening, but without occasioning either disorder or crime, rather, indeed, preventing all evil of that description. This state of things began to surprise and alarm Mr. Pitt, who found the "conspiracy" becoming rather too extensive and dangerous for his purposes; for a moment he felt he might possibly get beyond his depth, and he conceived the necessity of forcing a premature explosion, by which he might excite sufficient horror throughout the country to serve his purpose, and be able to suppress the conspiracy in the bud, which might be beyond his power should it arrive at its maturity.

Individually, Lord Camden was an excellent man, and in ordinary times would have been an acquisition to the country,

but he was made a cruel instrument in the hands of Mr. Pitt, and seemed to have no will of his own; so that, although we are assured by Sir Jonah Barrington that he was personally and privately a most amiable person, his name will always be pronounced with horror and execration by Irishmen, as the official head of the Irish Government in these dreadful years of the reign of terror.

On a review of the state of Ireland at that period, it must be obvious that the design of Mr. Pitt to effect some mysterious measure in Ireland was now, through the unaccountable conduct of the Irish Government, beginning to develop itself. The seeds of insurrection which had manifested themselves in Scotland and in England were, by the vigour and promptitude of the British Government, rapidly crushed; and, by the reports of Parliament, Lord Melville had obtained and published prints of the different pikes manufactured in Scotland, long before that weapon had been manufactured by the Irish peasantry. But in Ireland, though it appeared from the public documents that Government had full and accurate information of the Irish United Societies, and that their leaders and chiefs were well known to the British Ministry, at the same period, and by the same means that England and Scotland were kept tranquil, so might have been Ireland.

Mr. Pitt, however, found he had temporized to the extremity of prudence; the disaffected had not yet appeared as a collected army, but, in his opinion nevertheless, prompt and decisive measures became absolutely indispensable. The Earl of Carhampton, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, first expressed his dissatisfaction at Mr. Pitt's inexplicable proceedings. His Lordship had but little military experience, but he was a man of courage and decision, ardent and obstinate; he determined, right or wrong, to annihilate the conspiracy. Without the consent of the Irish Government he had commanded the troops that, on all symptoms of insurrectionary movements, they should act without waiting for the presence of any civil power. Martial law had not then been proclaimed. He went, therefore, a length which could not possibly be supported; his orders were countermanded by the Lord-Lieutenant; but he refused to obey the Viceroy, under the colour that he had no rank in the army.

Lord Carhampton found that the troops in the garrison of Dublin were indoctrinated by the United Irishmen; he, therefore, withdrew them, and formed two



distinct camps on the south and north, some miles from the capital, and thereby, as he conceived, prevented all intercourse of the army with the disaffected of the metropolis. Both measures were disapproved of by the Lord-Lieutenant, whom Lord Carhampton again refused to obey.

The King's sign manual was at length procured, ordering him to break up his camps and bring back the garrison; this he obeyed, and marched the troops into Dublin barracks. "He then resigned his command, and publicly declared that some deep and insidious scheme of the Minister was in agitation; for, instead of suppressing, the Irish Government was obviously disposed to excite an insurrection.

"Mr. Pitt counted on the expertness of the Irish Government to effect a premature explosion. Free quarters were now ordered, to irritate the Irish population; *slow tortures* were inflicted under the pretence of forcing confessions; the people were goaded and driven to madness."\*

General Abercrombie, who succeeded as Commander-in-Chief, was not permitted to abate these enormities, and therefore resigned with disgust; but not before deliberately stating, in general orders, that the army placed under his command, from their state of disorganization, would soon be much more formidable to their friends than to their enemies; and that he would not countenance or admit free quarters.

About this time occurred an episode in the history of the United Irishmen—the arrest and trial of Arthur O'Connor, Coigley, and others, in England.

From the time O'Connor became a member of the Leinster Directory of the United Irishmen, he was the foremost leader in their affairs. When the United Irishmen solicited the intervention of France in 1796, O'Connor negotiated the treaty with the agent of the French Directory. He and Lord Edward had an interview subsequently with Hoche, and arranged the place of landing, and consequent military operations.

In the early part of 1796, O'Connor had been arrested and committed to the Tower, "vehemently suspected of sundry treasons," rather than charged with any specific crime against the State. After an imprisonment of six months he was liberated. In February, 1798, he came to England, with an intention, as it afterwards appeared, of proceeding to France, in conjunction with John Binns, member

of the London Corresponding Society, James Coigley, an Irish priest, and a person of the name of Allen. In the latter end of February they went to Margate, intending to hire a small vessel to convey them to France. Some circumstances in their conduct, however, exciting suspicion, they were all apprehended, and first committed prisoners to the Tower, and afterwards to Maidstone jail. At Maidstone they were tried by a special commission on the 21st and 22d of May, and all of them acquitted, except Coigley, on whom had been found a paper, purporting to be an address from "the Secret Committee of England to the Executive Directory of France." Coigley was condemned and executed; and Mr. O'Connor and Binns, after their acquittal, were detained on another charge of treason preferred against them. In the meantime, and in consequence of the motion of Mr. O'Donnel, an act had passed the Irish Parliament authorising grand juries to present any newspaper containing seditious or libellous matter as a nuisance; and also authorising the magistrates, on such presentation, to suppress the paper, and seize and destroy the printing materials, &c. The paper called *The Press* was, therefore, suppressed, and some of its principal supporters taken into custody; but no discovery of importance resulted from this transaction.

During the first three months of 1798 the outrages committed by the magistrates, with the aid of the troops and yeomanry, upon the simple and defenceless people of Leinster, became fearful and notorious. But, painful as must be the details of a slow and uniform agony of a whole people, there can be no history of Ireland in which such details do not hold a conspicuous place. As a perfectly authentic historical document, the speech of the Earl of Moira, in the British House of Peers (not one statement of which has ever been contradicted) may be taken as a sufficient picture of the state of the country, even as early as the November of 1797. Here follows an extract:—"My lords, I have seen in Ireland the most absurd, as well as the most disgusting tyranny that any nation ever groaned under. I have been myself a witness of it in many instances; I have seen it practised and unchecked; and the effects that have resulted from it have been such as I have stated to your lordships. I have said that, if such a tyranny be persevered in, the consequence must inevitably be the deepest and most universal discontent, and even hatred to the English

\* Sir Jonah Barrington. "Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation."



name. I have seen in that country a marked distinction made between the English and Irish. I have seen troops that have been sent full of this prejudice—that every inhabitant in that kingdom is a rebel to the British Government. I have seen the most wanton insults practised upon men of all ranks and conditions. I have seen the most grievous oppressions exercised, in consequence of a presumption that the person who was the unfortunate object of such oppression was in hostility to the Government; and yet that has been done in a part of the country as quiet and as free from disturbance as the city of London. Who states these things, my lords, should, I know, be prepared with proofs. I am prepared with them. Many of the circumstances I know of my own knowledge; others I have received from such channels as will not permit me to hesitate one moment in giving credit to them.

“His lordship then observed that, from education and early habits, the *curfew* was ever considered by Britons as a badge of slavery and oppression. It then was practised in Ireland with brutal rigour. He had known an instance where a master of a house had in vain pleaded to be allowed the use of a candle to enable the mother to administer relief to her daughter struggling in convulsive fits. In former times, it had been the custom for Englishmen to hold the infamous proceedings of the inquisition in detestation. One of the greatest horrors with which it was attended was that the person, ignorant of the crime laid to his charge, or of his accuser, was torn from his family, immured in a prison, and in the most cruel uncertainty as to the period of his confinement, or the fate which awaited him. To this injustice, abhorred by Protestants in the practice of the inquisition, were the people of Ireland exposed. All confidence, all security were taken away. In alluding to the inquisition he had omitted to mention one of its characteristic features. If the supposed culprit refused to acknowledge the crime with which he was charged, he was put to the rack, to extort confession of whatever crime was alleged against him by the pressure of torture. The same proceedings had been introduced in Ireland. When a man was taken up on suspicion he was put to the torture; nay, if he were merely accused of concealing the guilt of another. The rack, indeed, was not at hand; but the punishment of picqueting was in practice, which had been for some years abolished as too inhuman, even in the dragoon service. He had known a

man, in order to extort confession of a supposed crime, or of that of some of his neighbours, picqueted till he actually fainted—picqueted a second time till he fainted again, and, as soon as he came to himself, picqueted a third time till he once more fainted; and all upon mere suspicion! Nor was this the only species of torture. Men had been taken and hung up till they were half dead, and then threatened with a repetition of the cruel treatment unless they made confession of the imputed guilt. These were not particular acts of cruelty, exercised by men abusing the power committed to them, but they formed a part of our system. They were notorious, and no person could say who would be the next victim of this oppression and cruelty, which he saw others endure. This, however, was not all; their lordships, no doubt, would recollect the famous proclamation issued by a military commander in Ireland, requiring the people to give up their arms. It never was denied that this proclamation was illegal, though defended on some supposed necessity; but it was not surprising that some reluctance had been shown to comply with it by men who conceived the Constitution gave them a right to keep arms in their houses for their own defence; and they could not but feel indignation in being called upon to give up their right. In the execution of the order the greatest cruelties had been committed. If any one was suspected to have concealed weapons of defence, his house, his furniture, and all his property was burnt; but this was not all. If it were supposed that any district had not surrendered all the arms which it contained, a party was sent out to collect the number at which it was rated; and, in the execution of this order, thirty houses were sometimes burnt down in a single night. Officers took upon themselves to decide discretionally the quantity of arms; and upon their opinions these fatal consequences followed. Many such cases might be enumerated; but, from prudential motives, he wished to draw a veil over more aggravated facts which he could have stated, and which he was willing to attest before the Privy Council, or at their lordships' bar. These facts were well known in Ireland, but they could not be made public through the channel of the newspapers, for fear of that summary mode of punishment which had been practised towards the *Northern Star*, when a party of troops in open day, and in a town where the General's headquarters were, went and destroyed all the offices and property belonging to that



paper. It was thus authenticated accounts were suppressed."

The same system of horrors had proceeded, with aggravations of brutality, from November, 1797; and it was in vain that any patriotic Irishman, who still attended Parliament, attempted, from time to time, to procure some kind of inquiry into the necessity for all this. Both Houses of Parliament were entirely in the hands of the Castle; and Clare and Castlereagh bore down all such efforts by the most insolent audacity of assertion.

On the 5th of March, Sir Lawrence Parsons, after a long and interesting speech, made a motion that a committee should be appointed to inquire into the state of the country, and to suggest such measures as were likely to conciliate the popular mind. Lord Caulfield, in a maiden speech of much ability, seconded the motion. Lord Castlereagh, with whom the majority of the House went, vehemently opposed it. He entered into a history of the country for some years back, and concluded from the events that the United Irishmen were not men who would be contented or conciliated by any measures of concession short of a separation from England, and fraternity with the French Republic; that they were in open rebellion, and, therefore, only to be met by force. He reasoned also to prove that the coercive measures of the Government had been *the consequences, not the causes, of the discontents*; that the excesses charged on the soldiery were naturally to be expected from the state of things, though he did not cease to lament them; and he also contended that where excesses had taken place the laws were open, and able to punish them.

This last assertion of his lordship about the law, was well known by every man who heard him to be simply false; but not more false than his assertion that military outrages were the consequences, not the cause, of the existing troubles. But being sure of an immense majority at his back, he could say what he pleased. The resolution offered by Sir Lawrence Parsons was negatived by an immense majority.

It was the same case in the House of Lords. Lord Moira, after vainly trying to make an impression on the peers of England, came over to make a last effort with those of Ireland. He made a speech very similar to that which he had made at Westminster, and reciting the same facts; ending with a motion for an address to the Viceroy. Lord Clare, the Chancellor, replied in the same tone of cool and dashing insolence which had

now become the settled and preconcerted style of debate with the partisans of the Castle.

The Lord-Chancellor, after paying a just compliment to the character of the noble earl, attributed to his residence out of his own country his ignorance of it. "He asserted that the system of Government *had been a system of conciliation*; that in no place had the experiment been so fairly tried as in Ireland; in none had it so completely failed."

Lord Moira's motion was also negatived, of course; and it was evident that, so far as Parliament was concerned, the people were to be delivered over without reprieve to the picquetings of the soldiery and the knotted scourges of the yeoman.

Some degree of colour began at last to be given to the constant statements of Lord Castlereagh—that the country was in open rebellion; for in the months of February and March, there were several tumultuous assemblages at night; their object was to search for arms; and assuredly no people ever stood in more deadly need of arms than the Irish people then did. On one day in March, a party of mounted men even entered the little town of Cahir, county of Tipperary, in the open day, and took away all the arms they could find there. They appear to have gone as they came, without committing any violence or outrage.\* Still there was not that general insurrectionary movement for which Mr. Pitt was waiting; and it was now, therefore, resolved to give another turn to the screw of coercion. It was in the month of April that Sir Ralph Abercrombie, after two or three months' experience of his command, when he found that the army was expected to be used to goad the people to despair, while habits of marauding and "free quarters" were fast destroying the discipline of the troops themselves, resigned his post as Commander-in-Chief. His resignation was undoubtedly caused, as Lord Carhampton's had been, by his discovery that he was expected to act, not for the repression of rebellion, but in order to excite it. Of course, his military habits and principles would not permit him to say as much, nor to hint at any fault on the part of the Lord-Lieutenant;

\* Plowden, *Hist. Review*. This writer, indeed, alleges that the peasants in those two months "committed many murders;" but though a Catholic writer, his well-known political principles make him always too ready to charge crimes on very doubtful evidence, upon all Catholics who were not "loyal" to the King of England. He does not particularize any of these "many murders;" and it may, therefore, be fairly doubted that there were any murders, except, perhaps, of an occasional tithe-proctor.



yet the first paragraph of his famous "General Order" was at once seen to be so wholly at variance with the plans and policy of the Government, that there was nothing left for Sir Ralph but to resign, and seek some more honourable employment for his sword. The General Order is as follows:—

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
DUBLIN, Feb. 26, 1798.

[*"General Orders."*]

"The very disgraceful frequency of courts-martial, and the many complaints of the conduct of the troops in this kingdom, having too unfortunately proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness, which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy; the Commander-in-Chief thinks it necessary to demand from all generals commanding districts and brigades, as well as commanding officers of regiments, that they exert themselves, and compel, from all officers under their command, the strictest and most unremitting attention to the discipline, good order, and conduct of their men; such as may restore the high and distinguished reputation the British troops have been accustomed to enjoy in every part of the world. It becomes necessary to recur, and most pointedly to attend to the standing orders of the kingdom, which at the same time that they direct military assistance to be given at the requisition of the civil magistrate, positively forbid the troops to act (but in case of attack) without his presence and authority; and the most clear and precise orders are to be given to the officer commanding the party for this purpose.

"The utmost prudence and precaution are also to be used in granting parties to revenue officers, with respect to the person requiring such assistance and those employed on the duty; whenever a guard is mounted, patrols must be frequently out to take up any soldier who may be found out of his quarters after his hours.

"A very culpable remissness having also appeared on the part of officers respecting the necessary inspection of barracks, quarters, messes, &c., as well as attendance at roll-calls, and other hours; commanding officers must enforce the attention of those under their command to those points, and the general regulations; for all which the strictest responsibility will be expected from them.

"It is of the utmost importance that the discipline of the dragoon regiments should be minutely attended to, for the facilitating of which the Commander-in-

Chief has dispensed with the attendance of orderly dragoons on himself, and desires that they may not be employed by any general or commanding officers but on military and indispensable business.

"G. HEWIT,

"Adjutant-General.

"Lieut.-Gen. CRAIG,

"*Eastern District Barracks, Dublin.*"

The resignation of Sir Ralph Abercrombie was immediately followed by the departure of Mr. Secretary Pelham; who, as Mr. Plowden alleges, also disapproved of the new plan of "prematurely exploding the rebellion" by the simple machinery of goading the people to despair. It is notorious that in Ireland the active Minister, upon whom the odium or merit of the Government measures personally fell, was the first Secretary of the Lord-Lieutenant. Through his mouth did His Excellency speak to the House of Commons; from him did the nation expect the reason, and upon him chiefly rested the responsibility of the Government measures in the belief of the public. His sentiments were, of course, concluded to be in perfect unison with the Lord-Lieutenant, as his voice was the organ of His Excellency. It appears that Mr. Pelham, however earnest and firm he had been in opposing Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, which two questions Earl Camden had avowedly been sent to oppose, was very far from approving the harsh and sanguinary means of dragooning the people which had been for some time practised, and were intended to be persevered in.\* He resolved, therefore,

\* We do not desire to use stronger language than the facts will warrant, nor to advance, without sufficient authority, against any Government so atrocious a charge as that of resolving to goad a people into insurrection, in order to make a pretext for slaughtering them first, and depriving their country of its national existence afterwards. This system at this time, viz., 5th April, 1798, Mr. Grattan has thus described: "Here we perceive and lament the effects of inveteracy, conceived by His Majesty's Ministers against the Irish. 'Irrepressible and quellable, devoted to superstition, deaf to law, and hostile to property;' such was the picture which at different times his Ministers in Ireland have painted of his people, with a latent view to flatter the English by the degradation of the Irish, and by such sycophantship and malice, they have persuaded themselves to consider their fellow subjects as a different species of human creature, fair objects of religious proscription and political incapacities, but not of moral relationship, or moral obligation; accordingly, they have afforded indemnity for the rich, and new pains and penalties for the people; they have given felonious descriptions of His Majesty's subjects, and have easily persuaded themselves to exercise felonious practices against their lives and properties; they have become as barbarous as their system, and as savage as their own description of their countrymen and their equals; and now it seems they have



to retire from a situation in which he was under the necessity of giving official countenance and support to a system which in principle he abhorred, and which he knew to have been extorted from the Chief Governor, whose immediate and responsible agent he was before the public. The last time he spoke in public was on Sir Lawrence Parsons' motion, which he opposed in a manner that evidently betrayed the uneasiness of his own situation. Mr. Pelham, however, did not resign. Indeed, Sir Jonah Barrington, and other authorities, affirm that he only went to England on account of ill-health. At any rate, his successor in active duty (but only at first as *locum tenens*) was Lord Castlereagh—afterwards Lord Londonderry—perhaps the ablest, and certainly the worst, man who ever “did the king's business” in Ireland. He was not gazetted as Secretary till the next year.

General Lake was placed provisionally in command of the forces; and the way was now open for the full development of the bloody conspiracy of the Government against the people. There was now concentrated in Ireland a force of at least 130,000 men, including regular troops, English and Scotch fencible regiments and Irish militia. But even this was not enough. On the 23rd of April, the new Secretary announced to the House of Commons that two regiments of “foreign troops” had been ordered to Ireland. These were the Hessians, German mercenaries from Hesse Darmstadt and Hesse Cassel, who had been for some time favourite instruments of the British Government for dragooning any refractory population.

On the 30th of March, the whole country was placed under martial law by proclamation. It was the first time that the County of Wexford had been proclaimed under the “Insurrection act;” and “from that moment,” says Miles Byrne, “every one considered himself walking on a mine, ready to be blown up; and all sighed for orders to begin.” Orders were at once issued from the Castle that the military should proceed at their own absolute discretion in all measures

communicated to the British Minister, at once, their deleterious maxims and their foul expressions, and he too indulges and wants in villainous discourses against the people of Ireland, sounding the horrid trumpet of carnage and separation. Thus the language of the Ministers becomes an encouragement to the army to murder the Irish.

“We leave these scenes, they are dreadful; a Ministry in league with the abettors of the Orange Boys and at war with the people; a people unable to procure a hearing in either country, while the loquacity of their enemies besieges the throne.”

which any officer should judge needful for suppressing that rebellion which did not yet exist, but which it was fully determined should immediately break out. A favourite measure of Lord Castlereagh was the system of “free quarters.” His lordship knew thoroughly the people of his country; and was aware that nothing could so certainly and promptly goad them into desperate resistance as the quartering of an insolent and licentious soldiery in their houses and amongst their families. “Free quarters,” therefore, were at once ordered; the magistrates of the “Ascendency” were at the same time assured that whatever they should think fit to do against the people should be considered well done. They had already (by the “Indemnity Act”) *carte blanche*, at any rate; and now, under the new impulsion given by the new Secretary, they vied with one another in atrocity. In the Counties of Kildare, Meath, Dublin, Carlow, Wicklow, and Wexford, the horrors of this oppression were especially grievous. The good Miles Byrne, every word of whose narration is thoroughly worthy of implicit trust, says: “The military placed on free quarters with the inhabitants were mostly furnished by the Ancient Britons, a cruel regiment, which became obnoxious from the many outrages they committed, wherever they were stationed; being quartered in houses where the men had to absent themselves, the unfortunate females who remained had to suffer all sorts of brutality from these ferocious monsters. What hardships, what calamities and miseries had not the wretched people to suffer, on whom were let loose such a body of soldiery as were then in Ireland!”

This gallant old Miles Byrne, writing from his notes sixty years afterwards (he was but eighteen years old in 1798), thus details some few of the scenes which passed in his county, and within his own knowledge:—

“Many of the low-bred magistrates availed themselves of the martial law to prove their vast devotion to Government, by persecuting, and often torturing, the inoffensive country people. Archibald Hamilton Jacob and the Enniscorthy Yeomen Cavalry never marched out of the town without being accompanied by a regular executioner, with his ropes, cat-o'-nine-tails, &c.

“Hawtry White, Solomon Richards, and a Protestant minister of the name of Owens, were all notorious for their cruelty and persecuting spirit; the latter particularly so, putting on pitch caps, and exercising other torments. To the credit of



some of his victims, when the vile fellow himself was in their power, and was brought a prisoner to the insurgent camp at Gorey, they sought no other revenge than that of putting a pitch cap on him. I had often difficulty in preventing the others who had suffered so much at his hands, from tearing him to pieces. He, in the end, escaped, with many other prisoners, being escorted and guarded by men who did not consider that revenge, or retaliation of any kind, would forward the sacred cause they were embarked in; particularly as they were desirous it should not be thought that it was a religious war they were engaged in. Although several of the principal chiefs of the United Irishmen were Protestants, the Orange magistrates did all they could to spread the belief that the Catholics had no other object in view but to kill their Protestant fellow-subjects, and to give weight to this opinion, they did what they could to provoke the unfortunate people to commit outrages and reprisals, by killing some and burning their houses.

"In short, the state of the country previous to the insurrection is not to be imagined, except by those who witnessed the atrocities of every description committed by the military and the Orangemen, who were let loose on the unfortunate, defenceless population.

"The infamous Hunter Gowan\* now sighed for an opportunity to vent his ferocious propensity of murdering his Catholic neighbours in cold blood. When the yeomanry corps was first formed, he was not considered sufficiently respectable to be charged with the command of one; but in consequence of the proclamation of martial law, he soon obtained a commission of the peace and was created a captain, and was commissioned to raise a cavalry corps; in a short time he succeeded in getting about thirty or forty low Orangemen, badly mounted; but they soon procured better horses at the expense of the unfortunate farmers, who were plundered without redress. This corps went by the name of the Black Mob; their first campaign was to arrest all the Catholic blacksmiths, and to burn their houses. Poor William Butter, James Haydon, and Dalton, smiths whom we employed to shoe our horses and do other work for many years before, were condemned to be transported, according to the recent law enacted, that magis-

\* This Hunter Gowan had been horsewhipped by one of the Byrnes, old Garrett Byrne, of Ballymanus. Miles Byrne says; "Gowan took the law of Garret Byrne, and ran him into great expense." He soon, however, found out even a more effectual method of having his revenge upon the Byrnes.

trates upon their own authority could sentence to transportation. But the monster, Hunter Gowan, thinking this kind of punishment too slight, wished to give his young men an opportunity to prove they were staunch blood-hounds. Poor Garrett Fennell, who had just landed from England, and was on his way to see his father and family, was met by this corps, and tied by his two hands up to a tree; they then stood at a certain distance and each man lodged the contents of his carbine in the body of poor Fennell, at their captain's command.

"They then went to a house close by, where they shot James Darcy, a poor inoffensive man, the father of five children. The bodies of these two murdered victims were waked that night in the chapel of Monaseed, where the unhappy women and children assembled to lament their slaughtered relatives. This chapel was afterwards burned. Poor Fennell left a young widow and two children. This cruel deed took place on the road between our house and the chapel. The day after, the 25th of May, 1798, distant about three miles from our place, one of the most bloody deeds took place that was ever recorded in Irish history since the days of Cromwell. Twenty-eight fathers of families, prisoners, were shot and massacred in the Ball Alley of Carnew, without trial. Mr Cope, the Protestant minister, was one of the principal magistrates who presided at this execution. I knew several of the murdered men; particularly Pat Murphy, of Knockbrandon, at whose wedding I was two years before; he was a brave and most worthy man, and much esteemed. William Young, a Protestant, was amongst the slaughtered.

"At Dunlavin, County of Wicklow, previous to the rising, thirty-four men were shot without any trial; officers, to their disgrace, presiding and sanctioning these proceedings. But it is useless to enumerate or continue the list of cruelties perpetrated; it will suffice to say, that where the military were placed on free quarters, and where all kinds of crime were committed, the people were not worse off than those living where no soldiers were quartered; for in the latter instance, the inhabitants were generally called to their doors, and shot without ceremony; their houses being immediately burned or plundered.

"This was the miserable state our part of the country was in at the beginning of May, 1798. All were obliged to quit their houses and hide themselves the best way they could. Ned Fennell, Nicholas Murphy, and I agreed, the last time we



met, previous to the insurrection, that through the means of our female friends we should do everything in our power to keep the people from desponding, for we had every reason to hope that ere long there would be orders received for a general rising from the Directory. We also promised to endeavour to get news from Dublin, if possible, and at least from Arklow, through Phil Neill and young Garrett Graham, of that town, both of them very active and well known to the principal men in Dublin, and through them and Anthony Perry we expected shortly to receive instructions for what was best to be done, under the critical circumstances in which we were placed. I was daily in hopes of getting some information from my step-brother Kennedy (at Dublin), and on this account I remained as long as I could in the neighbourhood of our place, keeping away, however, from my mother's house; sleeping at night in the fields, watching in the daytime from the hills and high grounds to see if the military or yeomen were approaching."

It was a needful part of the general plan of Government to extend and encourage the Orange societies, and to exasperate them against their Catholic neighbours. Of the precise connection between the Castle and the Orange lodges it is not, of course, easy to ascertain the precise terms and extent. It is, however, notorious that, while the Irish and English Government has always professed to disapprove the sanguinary principles of the Orangemen, they have always relied upon that body in seasons of threatened revolt, as a willing force to crush the mass of the people; and that even so late as 1848, arms were secretly issued to the lodges from Dublin Castle. We have already seen Mr. Grattan's distinct declaration that "the Ministry was in league with the abettors of the Orange Boys, and at war with the people." In the examination of Mr. Arthur O'Connor before the Secret Committee, we find O'Connor describing the proceedings of the Government in these terms:—

"Finding how necessary it was to have some part of the population on their side, they had recourse to the old religious feuds, and set an organization of Protestants, whose fanaticism would not permit them to see they were enlisted under the banners of religion, to fight for a political usurpation they abhorred. No doubt, by these means you have gained a temporary aid, but by destroying the organization of the Union, and exasperating the great body of the people, you

will one day pay dearly for the aid you have derived from this temporary shift.

"Committee.—Government had nothing to do with the Orange system, nor their extermination.

"O'Connor.—You, my lord (Castlereagh), from the station you fill, must be sensible that the executive of any country has in its power to collect a vast mass of information, and you must know from the secret nature and the zeal of the Union, that its executive must have the most minute information of every act of the Irish Government. As one of the executive, it came to my knowledge that considerable sums of money were expended throughout the nation in endeavouring to extend the Orange system, and that the oath of extermination was administered. When these facts are coupled, not only with general impunity, which has been uniformly extended towards the acts of this infernal association, but the marked encouragement its members have received from Government, I find it impossible to exculpate the Government from being the parent and protector of these sworn extirpators."

In common fairness, we must give the Orange body the benefit of whatever credit can possibly be accorded to their own denial of their alleged oath of extermination. Early in this year, while the Government was scourging the people into revolt, certain Grand Masters of the Orangemen met in Dublin, and published the following document:—

"To the Loyal Subjects of Ireland:

"From the various attempts that have been made to poison the public mind, and slander those who have had the spirit to adhere to their King and Constitution, and to maintain the laws,

"We, the Protestants of Dublin, assuming the name of Orangemen, feel ourselves called upon, not to vindicate our principles, for we know that our honour and loyalty bid defiance to the shafts of malevolence and disaffection, but openly to disavow these principles and declare to the world the objects of our institution.

"We have long observed with indignation, the efforts that have been made to foment rebellion in this kingdom, by the seditious, who have formed themselves into societies under the specious name of United Irishmen.

"We have seen with pain the lower orders of our fellow-subjects forced or seduced from their allegiance, by the threats and machinations of traitors.

"And we have viewed with horror the



successful exertions of miscreants to encourage a foreign enemy to invade this happy land, in hopes of rising into consequence on the downfall of their country.

"We, therefore, thought it high time to rally round the Constitution, and pledge ourselves to each other to maintain the laws and support our good King against all his enemies, whether rebels to their God or to their country, and by so doing, show to the world that there is a body of men in this island who are ready in the hour of danger to stand forward in the defence of that grand palladium of our liberty, the Constitution of Great Britain and Ireland, obtained and established by the courage and loyalty of our ancestors, under the great King William.

"Fellow-subjects, we are accused of being an institution founded on principles too shocking to repeat, and bound together by oaths at which human nature would shudder; but we caution you not to be led away by such malevolent falsehoods, for we solemnly assure you, in the presence of the Almighty God, that *the idea of injuring any one on account of his religious opinions never entered into our hearts!* We regard every loyal subject as our friend, be his religion what it may, we have no enmity but to the enemies of our country.

"We further declare, that we are ready at all times to submit ourselves to the orders of those in authority under His Majesty, and that we will cheerfully undertake any duty which they should think proper to point out for us, in case either a foreign enemy shall dare to invade our coasts, or that a domestic foe should presume to raise the standard of rebellion in the land; to these principles we are pledged, and in support of them we are ready to shed the last drop of our blood.

"Signed by order of the several lodges in Dublin, for selves and other Masters,

"THOMAS VERNER,  
EDWARD BALL,  
JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD,  
WILLIAM JAMES,  
ISAAC DEJONCOURT."

The credit which can be given to this profession of principles is much diminished, or reduced to nothing, by the fact already recorded, that immediately on the establishment of the first Orange Lodges in Armagh County (the first of the above addressers being the founder and first Grand Master), the members of those lodges did forthwith set themselves to the task of extirpating all their Catholic neighbours, solely because they were Catholics; and that in one year they had

slain, or driven from their homes, fourteen hundred *families*, or seven thousand individuals.

It is further notorious that the Orange yeomanry serving in Leinster were amongst the most furious and savage torturers of the people.

## CHAPTER V.

1798.

Reynolds, the Informer.—Arrests of U. I. Chiefs in Dublin.—The Brothers Sheares.—Their Efforts to Delay Explosion.—Clare and Castlereagh Resolve to Hurry it.—Advance of the Military.—Half-Hanging.—Pitch Caps.—Scourging.—Judkin Fitzgerald.—Sir John Moore's Testimony.—His Disgust at the Atrocities.—General Napier's Testimony.—Catholic Bishops and Peers Profess their "Loyalty."—Armstrong, Informer.—Arrest of the Sheares.—Arrest and Death of Lord Edward.—Mr. Emmet's Evidence before Secret Committee.—Insurrection Breaks Out.—The 23rd of May.—Naas.—Prosperous.—Kilcullen.—Proclamation of Lake.—Of the Lord Mayor of Dublin.—Skirmishes at Carlow.—Hacketstown, &c.—Insurgents have the Advantage at Dunboyne.—Attack on Carlow.—Executions.—Sir E. Crosbie.—Massacre at Gibbet Rath of Kildare.—Slaughter on Tara Hill.—Suppression of Insurrection in Kildare, Dublin, and Meath.

THE Government was now preparing its master-stroke, which was both to cause a premature explosion of the insurrection, and to deprive the people at one blow of their leaders, both civil and military. There existed, unfortunately, at that period, one Thomas Reynolds, a silk mercer of Dublin, who had purchased an estate in the county of Kildare, called Kilkea Castle, and from the fortune he had acquired, commanded considerable influence with his Catholic brethren. Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Oliver Bond, two leaders in the conspiracy, having, for these reasons, considered him a proper person to assist in forwarding their revolutionary designs, easily attached him to their cause; and having succeeded, he was soon after sworn an United Irishman, at the house of Oliver Bond, in Dublin; in the year 1797, he accepted the commission of colonel, the offices of treasurer and representative of the county of Kildare, and at last that of delegate for the province of Leinster. He had money dealings about a mortgage of some lands at Castle Jordon with a Mr. Cope, a Dublin merchant, who having lamented to him, in the course of conversation, the undoubted symptoms of an approaching rebellion, Mr. Reynolds said that he knew a person connected with the United Irishmen, who, he believed,



would defeat their nefarious projects, by communicating them to Government, in order to make an atonement for the crime he had committed in joining them. Mr. Cope assured him that such a person would obtain the highest honours and pecuniary rewards that administration could confer. In short, after making his conditions, and receiving in hand five hundred guineas as a first payment on account, he told Mr. Cope that the Leinster delegates were to meet at Oliver Bond's on the 12th of March, to concert measures for an insurrection which was shortly to take place, but did not at that time acknowledge that the information came directly from him, but insinuated that it was imparted by a third person.

In consequence of this, Justice Swan, attended by twelve sergeants in coloured clothes, arrested the Leinster delegates, thirteen in number, while sitting in council in the house of Oliver Bond, in Bridge street, on the 12th of March, 1798, and seized several of their papers, which led to the discovery of all their plans; and on the same day, Messrs Emmet, M'Neven, Bond, Sweetman, Henry Jackson, and Hugh Jackson were arrested and taken into custody; and warrants were granted against Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Messrs. M'Cormick and Sampson, who, having notice thereof, made their escape.\*

The leaders did not intend to make an insurrection till the French came to their assistance; and they meant in the meantime to continue to increase their numbers, and to add to their stock of arms.

On the removal of so many valuable leaders everything was done that could be done to repair the loss, and to keep the United Irishmen quiet; for it was now very well understood that the design of the Government was to provoke a premature explosion. The two brothers Sheares, Henry and John, both barristers, and gentlemen of high character and excellent education, took charge of the Government of the Leinster Societies. A handbill was immediately circulated, to keep up the spirits of the people, cautioning them against being either "goaded into untimely violence or sunk into pussillanimous despondency." The handbill concluded thus: "Be firm, Irishmen, but be cool and cautious. Be patient yet awhile. Trust to no unauthorized

communication; and above all, we warn you—again and again we warn you—against doing the works of your tyrants by premature, by partial or divided exertion. If Ireland shall be forced to throw away the scabbard, let it be at her own time, not theirs."

But Lords Camden, Clare, and Castlereagh were determined that it should be at *their* time. Universal military executions and "free quarters" were at once proclaimed all over the country.

It is difficult to detail with due historic coolness the horrors which followed the proclamation of the 30th of March; nor can we wonder that Dr. Madden expresses himself thus upon the occasion:—"The rebellion did not break out till May, 1798, and, to use the memorable words of Lord Castlereagh, even then 'measures were taken by Government to cause its premature explosion;' words which include the craft, cruelty, and cold-blooded, deliberate wickedness of the politics of a Machiavelli, the principles of a Thug, and the perverted tastes and feelings of a eunuch in the exercise of power and authority, displayed in acts of sly malignity and stealthy, vindictive turpitude, perpetrated on pretence of serving purposes of state."

Besides, Lord Castlereagh, if he was really the chief adviser of those measures to cause a premature explosion, was not the only person who approved of them. The same Secret Committee whose report is so often cited, states, "that it appears, from a variety of evidence laid before your committee, that the rebellion would not have broken out as soon as it did had it not been for the *well-timed measures* adopted by Government subsequent to the proclamation of the Lord-Lieutenant and Council, bearing date 30th of March, 1798." It is necessary to ascertain what these well-timed measures were. On the examination of the state prisoners before this committee in August, 1798, the Lord-Chancellor put the following question to Mr. Emmet: "Pray, Mr. Emmet, what caused the late insurrection?" To which Mr. Emmet replied: "The free quarters, house-burnings, tortures, and the military executions in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow!" Messrs. M'Neven and O'Connor gave similar replies to the same query.

However that may be, it remains now to give something like a connected narrative of what was actually done, and how the premature explosion did burst out.\*

\* A few days after these arrests there was a meeting of the Provincial Committee at the "Brazen Head Hotel." It was there proposed by a man named Reynolds, a distant relative of the traitor, that Thomas Reynolds should be put out of the way—that is, assassinated. The proposal was rejected unanimously.—Madden, 1st Series.

\* The authorities for this period are numerous—Sir Richard Musgrave, Hay, Gordon, Miles Byrne,



The proclamation which was published on the 30th of March declared that a traitorous conspiracy, existing within the kingdom for the destruction of the established Government, had been considerably extended, and had manifested itself in acts of open violence and rebellion; and that, in consequence thereof, the most direct and positive orders had been issued to the officers commanding his Majesty's forces to employ them with the utmost rigour and decision for the immediate suppression of that conspiracy, and for the disarming of the rebels and all disaffected persons, by the most summary and effectual measures. To Sir Ralph Abercrombie, then chief commander of the forces, orders were issued from the Lord-Lieutenant to proceed with his army into the disturbed counties, vested with full powers to act according to his discretion for the attainment of the proposed object. A manifesto, dated from his headquarters at Kildare, the 3rd of April, was addressed to the inhabitants of the county by the General, requiring them to surrender their arms in the space of ten days from the date of the notice, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to distribute large bodies of troops among them to live at free quarters—promising rewards to such as would give information of concealed arms or ammunition—and announcing his resolution of recurring to other severities if the county should still continue in a disturbed state.

On the advance of the military into each county, the same notice was given to its inhabitants, and at the expiration of the term prescribed the troops were quartered on the houses of the disaffected or suspected, in numbers proportioned to the supposed guilt and ability of the owners, whose pecuniary circumstances were often deeply injured by the maintenance of the soldiery, and the waste which was otherwise made of their effects. Numbers of houses, with their furniture, were burned, in which concealed arms had been found, in which meetings of the Union had been holden, or whose occupants had been guilty of the fabrication of pikes, or had been suspected of other practices for the promotion of the conspiracy. Numbers were daily scourged, picqueted, or otherwise put to pain, to force confessions of concealed arms or plots. Outrageous acts of severity were often committed by persons not in the regular troops—some from an unfeigned

and others from an affected zeal for the service of the Crown. These various vexations amounted on the whole to such a mass of disquietude and distress that the exhortations of the chiefs to bear their evils with steady patience, until an opportunity of successful insurrection should occur, proved vain with the lower classes.

To authorize the burning of houses and furniture, the wisdom of administration may have seen as good reason as for other acts of severity, though to many that reason was not clear. These burnings, doubtless, caused no small terror and consternation to the disaffected; but they caused also a loss to the community at large, rendered many quite desperate who were deprived of their all, augmented the violence of hatred in those among whom those houseless people took refuge. Men imprisoned on suspicion, or private information, were sometimes half hanged, or strangled almost to death, before their guilt or innocence could be ascertained by trial. Reflecting loyalists were much concerned at the permission or impunity of such acts, which tended strongly to confirm the prejudices already so laboriously excited by the emissaries of revolution.

Among the causes which, in the troubled interval of time previous to the grand insurrection, contributed to the general uneasiness, were the insults practised by pretended zealots to the annoyance of the true loyalists as well as malcontents, on persons who wore their hair short, or happened to have any part of their apparel of a green colour, both of which were considered as emblems of republican or of a revolutionary spirit. The term *croppy* was adopted to signify a revolutionist, or an enemy to the established Government. Persons of malevolent minds took advantage of these circumstances to indulge their general malignity or private malice, when they could with impunity. On the heads of many who were selected as objects of outrage, were fixed by these pretended loyalists caps of coarse linen or strong brown paper, smeared with pitch on the inside, which in some instances adhered so firmly as not to be disengaged without a laceration of the hair, and even skin. On the other side, several of the United party made it a practice to seize violently such as they thought proper or were able, and cropped or cut their hair short, which rendered them liable to the outrage of the pitched cap of those pretended strenuous partisans of the Constitution. Handkerchiefs, ribbons, even a sprig of myrtle and other parts of dress marked with the obnoxious

&c., for County Wexford. In the text we adopt in the main the narrative of Plowden, checking it where needful by the documents assembled together by Madden, Lord Camden's dispatches, &c.



colour, were torn or cut away from females unconscious of disloyalty, and undesignedly bearing the imaginary badge. Various other violent acts were committed, so far as to cut away pieces of men's ears, even sometimes the whole ear, or a part of the nose; nor could the staunchest loyalist be certain always of exemption from insult by being clear of all imaginary marks of disloyalty; for on the arrival of a detachment of the army in any part of the country where the inhabitants were known to the officers and soldiers, which was almost always the case, private malice was apt to convey in whispers false intelligence, marking individuals, perhaps the best members of society, as proper objects of military outrage, and they suffered accordingly.

By the system of secret accusation and espionage thus universally adopted, with other extraordinary measures, in this dangerous crisis, Government made ample room for the exertions of private malice. Magistrates and military officers were empowered to receive informations, to keep the names of the informers profoundly secret, and proceed against the accused according to discretion.

One case deserves particular mention, not because of its peculiar atrocity—for there was very many such—but on account of the very singular fact that the perpetrator was afterwards punished by law. It is thus recorded by Mr. Gordon, a Protestant clergyman, in his *History of the Rebellion*:—

“Thomas Fitzgerald, High Sheriff of Tipperary, seized at Clonmel a gentleman of the name of Wright, against whom no grounds of suspicion could be conjectured by his neighbours, caused five hundred lashes to be inflicted on him in the severest manner, and confined him several days without permitting his wounds to be dressed, so that his recovery from such a state of torture and laceration could hardly be expected. In a trial at law, after the rebellion, on an action of damages brought by Wright against this magistrate, the innocence of the plaintiff appeared so manifest, even at a time when prejudices ran amazingly high against persons accused of disloyalty, that the defendant was condemned to pay five hundred pounds to his prosecutor. Many other actions of damages on similar grounds would have been commenced if the Parliament had not put a stop to such proceedings by an act of indemnity for all errors committed by magistrates from supposed zeal for the public service. A letter written in the French language, found in the pocket of Wright, was hastily con-

sidered a proof of guilt, though the letter was of a perfectly innocent nature.”

This was the same Fitzgerald whom the good and gallant Sir John Moore saw once in the village of Clogheen engaged in his favourite pursuit. Sir John Moore had the misfortune, like Abercrombie, to hold a command in that army of military execution; and on his march from Fermoy, entering the town of Clogheen, he saw a man tied up and under the lash, while the street itself was lined with country people on their knees, with their hats off; nor was his disgust repressed when he was informed that the High Sheriff, Mr. Fitzgerald, was making great discoveries, and that he had already flogged the truth out of many respectable persons. His rule was “to flog each person till he told the truth.”

The brave Sir John Moore has borne ample testimony to the barbarity of the policy he had witnessed in Ireland pursued by the authorities, and the revenge the Orange gentry and yeomen indulged in upon the poor. In speaking of Wicklow, where Sir John had been chiefly employed, he states his opinion, “that moderate treatment by the generals, and the preventing of the troops from pillaging and molesting the people would soon restore tranquillity, and the latter would certainly be quiet if the gentry and yeomen would only behave with tolerable decency, and not seek to gratify their ill-humour and revenge upon the poor.”\*

Major-General William Napier, commenting in the *Edinburgh Review* on the Life of Sir John Moore, and the indignation he had always expressed at such atrocious cruelty to the poor people, takes occasion to give his own recollections of the period. He exclaims: “What manner of soldiers were thus let loose upon the wretched districts which the Ascendancy-men were pleased to call disaffected? They were men, to use the venerable Abercrombie's words, who were ‘formidable to everybody but the enemy.’ We ourselves were young at the time; yet, being connected with the army, we were continually amongst the soldiers, listening with boyish eagerness to their conversation, and we well remember—and with horror to this day—the tales of lust, and blood, and pillage—the record of their own actions against the miserable peasantry—which they used to relate.” And it is important to remember that all this while there was no insurrection. True, insurrection was intended and longed for; but the people were then

\* Review in the *Edinburgh of Life of Sir J Moore*. The reviewer was General Wm. Napier.



neither ready nor inclined to turn out and fight the King's troops. They knew well that they needed a small organized force of regular troops to form a nucleus of an army, and were still waiting and looking out for the French.

In the very midst of the horrible scourging oppression which was thus driving the people to madness, one can derive no pleasure from the fact that Catholic bishops and peers took that very time to testify their loyalty, their attachment to the English Throne, and their detestation of rebellion. On the 6th of May, the Lords Fingal, Gormanstown, Southwell, Kenmare, Sir Edward Bellew, and forty-one other noblemen, gentlemen, and professors of divinity, including Bishop Hussey, President of Maynooth, published a declaration under their signatures, "with a view," says Mr. Plowden, "of rescuing their body from the imputation of abetting and favouring rebellion and treason." The document was thus addressed:—"To such of the deluded people now in rebellion against His Majesty's Government in this kingdom as profess the Roman Catholic religion." Those doctors of divinity could vilify rebels very much at their ease; but if one of them had found himself in the position of Father John Murphy, when, on a certain day in this same month of May, returning to his home, he found his house and his humble chapel of Boolavogue smoking in ruins, and his poor parishioners crowding round him in wild affright, not daring to go even to the neighbourhood of their ruined homes, "for fear of being whipped, burned, or exterminated by the Orangemen, hearing of the number of people that were put to death unarmed and unoffending through the country"—one would be curious to know what that doctor of divinity would have done upon such an emergency. Probably very much as Father John did.

A certain Captain Armstrong, an officer of the Kildare militia, a man of some landed property and decent position in society, was the person who now undertook to act the part of Reynolds, and serve as a spy upon the brothers John and Henry Sheares. Armstrong gained access to the confidence, and even intimacy, of the Sheares, not only by his agreeable social qualities, but by his pretended zeal in the cause to which they were devoted. He dined with the two brothers, at their house in Baggot street, on the 20th of May: the next morning they were both arrested. Doctor Madden says of this transaction: "Captain Armstrong, in his evidence on the trial of the

Sheares, did not think it necessary to state that at his Sunday's interview (May 20th, 1798) he shared the hospitality of his victims; that he dined with them, sat in the company of their aged mother and affectionate sister, enjoyed the society of the accomplished wife of one of them, caressed his infant children, and on another occasion—referred to by Miss Steele—was entertained with music—the wife of the unfortunate man, whose children he was to leave in a few days fatherless, playing on the harp for his entertainment! These things are almost too horrible to think on.

"Armstrong, after dining with his victims on Sunday, returned to their house no more. This was the last time the cloven foot of treachery passed the threshold of the Sheares. On the following morning they were arrested and committed to Kilmainham jail. The terrible iniquity of Armstrong's conduct on that Sunday—when he dined with his victims, sat in social intercourse with their families a few hours only before he was aware his treachery would have brought ruin on that household—is unparalleled."

We may mention here, parenthetically, that Captain Armstrong, after having hanged his hospitable entertainers of Baggot street, lived himself to a good old age (he died in 1858); but in his interview with Dr. Madden, touching some alleged inaccuracies in the work of the latter, he denied having caressed any children at Sheares'. He said "he never recollected having seen the children at all; but there was a young lady of about fifteen there, whom he met at dinner. The day he dined there (and he dined there only once), he was urged by Lord Castlereagh to do so. It was wrong to do so, and he (Captain Armstrong) was sorry for it; but he was persuaded by Lord Castlereagh to go there to dine, for the purpose of getting further information."

Perhaps the history of no other country can show us an example of the first minister of state personally exhorting his spies to go to a gentleman's house and mingle with his family in social intercourse, in order to procure evidence to hang him. However, his lordship did procure the information he wanted. He found that the leaders of the United Irishmen, being at length convinced of the impossibility of restraining the people and keeping them quiet under such intolerable tyranny, had decided on a general rising for the 23rd of May.

The whole of the United Irishmen throughout the kingdom, or at least



throughout the province of Leinster, were to act at once in concert; and it was their intention to seize the camp of Loughlinstown, the artillery of Chapel-izod, and the Castle of Dublin in one night—the 23rd of May. One hour was to be allowed between seizing the camp of Loughlinstown and the artillery at Chapel-izod; and one hour and a half between seizing the artillery and surprising the Castle; and the parties who executed both of the external plans were to enter the city of Dublin at the same moment. The stopping of the mail coaches was to be the signal for the insurgents everywhere to commence their operations. It was also planned that a great insurrection should take place at Cork at the same time. The United men were, however, at that period, not exactly agreed as to the nature of the insurrection. Mr. Samuel Neilson with some other of the leaders were bent upon attacking first the county jail of Kilmainham and the jail of Newgate, in order to set their comrades at liberty; and the project for attacking the latter was also fixed for the 23rd of May, the night of the general insurrection. The Sheares, however, and others were of a contrary opinion, and they wished to defer the attack on the jails till after the general insurrection had taken place.

Although the Government had been long in possession, through the communications of Reynolds, Armstrong, and other informers, of all the particulars of the conspiracy, they had hitherto permitted or encouraged its progress, in order, as it has been alleged, that the suppression of it might be effected with more *eclat* and terror. As the expected explosion, however, now drew so near, it was found to be necessary to arrest several of the principal leaders, who might give direction, energy, and effect to the insurrection. Lord Edward Fitzgerald had concealed himself since the 12th of March; and, on the 18th of May, Major Sirr, having received information that he would pass through Watling Street that night, and be preceded by a chosen band of traitors as an advanced guard, and that he would be accompanied by another, repaired thither, attended by Captain Ryan, Mr. Emerson, of the Attorneys' Corps, and a few soldiers in coloured clothes. They met the party which preceded him, and had a skirmish with them on the quay at the end of Watling Street, in which some shots were exchanged; and they took one of them prisoner, who called himself at one time Jameson, at another time Brand.

The arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald was effected next day, the 19th of May.

Government having received information that he had arrived in Dublin, and was lodged in the house of one Murphy, a featherman in Thomas Street, sent Major Sirr to arrest him. He, attended by Captain Swan, of the Revenue Corps, and Captain Ryan, of the Sepulchre's, and eight soldiers disguised, about five o'clock in the evening repaired in coaches to Murphy's house. While they were posting the soldiers in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of an escape, Captain Swan perceiving a woman running hastily up stairs, for the purpose, as he supposed, of alarming Lord Edward, followed her with the utmost speed; and, on entering an apartment, found Lord Edward lying on a bed, in his dressing jacket. He approached the bed and informed his lordship that he had a warrant against him, and that resistance would be vain, assuring him at the same time that he would treat him with the utmost respect.

Lord Edward sprang from the bed and snapped a pistol, which missed fire, at Captain Swan; he then closed with him, drew a dagger, gave him a wound in the hand, and different wounds in his body; one of them, under the ribs, was deep and dangerous, and bled most copiously.

At that moment Captain Ryan entered, and missed fire at Lord Edward with a pocket pistol, on which he made a lunge at him with a sword cane, which bent on his ribs, but affected him so much that he threw himself on the bed; and Captain Ryan having thrown himself on him, a violent scuffle ensued, during which Lord Edward drew a dagger and plunged it into his side. They then fell on the ground, where Captain Ryan received many desperate wounds, one of which, in the lower part of his belly, was so large that his bowels fell out on the floor. Major Sirr, having entered the room, saw Captain Swan bleeding, and Lord Edward advancing towards the door, while Captain Ryan, weltering in blood on the floor, was holding him by one leg and Swan by the other. He therefore fired his pistol at Lord Edward, wounding him in the shoulder. His lordship then, quite overpowered, surrendered himself. He was conveyed at once to the Castle. This was two days before the arrest of the Sheares. In their house in Baggot Street was found a rough draft of a proclamation, which seems to have been intended for publication on the morning after taking possession of Dublin. It is violent and vindictive, though not approaching in atrocity to the actual scenes which were then daily enacted under the aus-



pices of Government. Still, having been published by the Government, and being authentic (at least as a rough draft), it forms a part of the history of the times. It is in these words :—

“Irishmen, your country is free, and you are about to be avenged. That vile Government which has so long and so cruelly oppressed you, is no more. Some of its most atrocious monsters have already paid the forfeit of their lives, and the rest are in our hands. The national flag—the sacred green—is at this moment flying over the ruins of despotism; and that capital, which a few hours past had witnessed the debauchery, the plots, and the crimes of your tyrants, is now the citadel of triumphant patriotism and virtue. Arise then, united sons of Ireland—arise like a great and powerful people, to live free, or die. Arm yourselves by every means in your power, and rush like lions on your foes. Consider, that for every enemy you disarm you arm a friend, and thus become doubly powerful. In the cause of liberty inaction is cowardice, and the coward shall forfeit the property he has not the courage to protect. Let his arms be secured and transferred to those gallant spirits who want and will use them. Yes, Irishmen, we swear by that eternal justice in whose cause you fight, that the brave patriot who survives the present glorious struggle, and the family of him who has fallen, or hereafter shall fall in it, shall receive from the hands of the grateful nation an ample recompense out of that property which the crimes of our enemies have forfeited into its hands; and his name shall be inscribed on the great national record of Irish revolution, as a glorious example to all posterity; but we likewise swear to punish robbery with death and infamy. We also swear that we will never sheathe the sword till every being in the country is restored to those equal rights which the God of nature has given to all men; until an order of things shall be established in which no superiority shall be acknowledged among the citizens of Erin but that of virtue and talents. As for those degenerate wretches who turn their swords against their native country, the national vengeance awaits them. Let them find no quarter, unless they shall prove their repentance by speedily exchanging the standard of slavery for that of freedom, under which their former errors may be buried, and they may share the glory and advantages that are due to the patriot bands of Ireland. Many of the military feel the love of liberty glow within their breasts, and have joined the

national standard. Receive with open arms such as shall follow so glorious an example. They can render signal service to the cause of freedom, and shall be rewarded according to their deserts. But, for the wretch who turns his sword against his native country, let the national vengeance be visited on him; let him find no quarter. Two other crimes demand . . . . Rouse all the energies of your souls; call forth all the merits and abilities which a vicious Government consigned to obscurity; and, under the conduct of your chosen leaders, march with a steady step to victory. Heed not the glare of hired soldiery, or aristocratic yeomanry; they cannot stand the vigorous shock of freedom. Their trappings and their arms will soon be yours; and the detested Government of England, to which we vow eternal hatred, shall learn that the treasures it exhausts on its accoutred slaves, for the purpose of butchering Irishmen, shall but further enable us to turn their swords on its devoted head. Attack them in every direction, by day and by night. Avail yourselves of the natural advantages of your country, which are innumerable, and with which you are better acquainted than they. Where you cannot oppose them in full force, constantly harass their rear and their flanks. Cut off their provisions and magazines, and prevent them as much as possible from uniting their forces. Let whatever moments you cannot devote to fighting for your country be passed in learning how to fight for it, or preparing the means of war; for war, war alone must occupy every mind and every hand in Ireland, until its long-oppressed soil be purged of all its enemies. Vengeance, Irishmen! Vengeance on your oppressors! Remember what thousands of your dearest friends have perished by their merciless orders. Remember their burnings, their rackings, their torturings, their military massacres, and their legal murders. *Remember Orr!*”

In this proclamation—if it really was intended to be issued as it was drawn up—we have at least the evidence that the United Irishmen were banded together to procure “equal rights for all,” and contemplated no oppression of any sect or class of their countrymen. However, such as it was, it must be considered to have been disavowed by other leaders of the United Irishmen then in prison. In the examination before the Secret Committee of the Lords, as we learn by the memoir of Emmet, M’Neven, and O’Connor, the following examination is found:—

“Lord Kilwarden.—You seem averse to



insurrection; I suppose it was because you thought it impolitic.

*“Emmet.”*—Unquestionably; for if I imagined an insurrection could have succeeded, without a great waste of blood and time, I should have preferred it to invasion, as it would not have exposed us to the chance of contributions being required by a foreign force; but as I did not think so, and as I was certain an invasion would succeed speedily, and without much struggle, I preferred it even at the hazard of that inconvenience, which we took every means to prevent.

*“Lord Dillon.”*—Mr. Emmet, you have stated the views of the executive to be very liberal and very enlightened, and I believe yours were so; but let me ask you whether it was not intended to cut off (in the beginning of the contest) the leaders of the opposition party by a summary mode, such as assassination. My reason for asking you is, John Sheares’ proclamation, the most terrible paper that ever appeared in any country. It says that ‘many of your tyrants have bled, and others must bleed,’ &c.

*“Emmet.”*—My lords, as to Mr. Sheares’ proclamation, he was not of the executive when I was.

*“Lord Chancellor.”*—He was of the new executive.

*“Emmet.”*—I do not know he was of any executive, except from what your lordship says; but I believe he was joined with some others in framing a particular plan of insurrection for Dublin and its neighbourhood; neither do I know what value he annexed to those words in his proclamation; but I can answer that, while I was of the executive, there was no such design but the contrary; for we conceived when one of you lost your lives we lost an hostage. Our intention was to seize you all, and keep you as hostages for the conduct of England; and, after the revolution was over, if you could not live under the new government, to send you out of the country. I will add one thing more, which, although it is not an answer to your question, you may have a curiosity to hear. In such a struggle it was natural to expect confiscations. Our intention was, that every wife who had not instigated her husband to resistance should be provided for out of the property, notwithstanding confiscations; and every child who was too young to be his own master, or form his own opinion, was to have a child’s portion. Your lordships will now judge how far we intended to be cruel.

*“Lord Chancellor.”*—Pray, Mr. Emmet, what caused the late insurrection?

*“Emmet.”*—The free quarters, the house-burnings, the tortures, and the military executions in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow.

*“Lord Chancellor.”*—Don’t you think the arrests of the 12th of March caused it?

*“Emmet.”*—No; but I believe if it had not been for those arrests it would not have taken place; for the people, irritated by what they suffered, had been long pressing the executive to consent to an insurrection; but they had resisted or eluded it, and even determined to persevere in the same line. After these arrests, however, other persons came forward who were irritated and thought differently, who consented to let that partial insurrection take place.”

On the 21st of May, Lord Castlereagh, by direction of the Lord-Lieutenant, wrote to the Lord Mayor of Dublin to inform him that there was a plan for seizing the city, and recommending precautions. The next day his lordship presented a message to the House of Commons to the same effect, and a loyal address was presented in reply. Great preparations for defence were now made in Dublin. Various civic bodies armed themselves in haste, and placed themselves at the service of the authorities. Among these was the Lawyers’ Corps, which showed great zeal on the occasion; and amongst the members of that body we find the name of a young lawyer who had very lately been called to the bar—Daniel O’Connell.

It was now impossible to prevent the rising. The United Irishmen of Leinster, though thus left without leaders, had got their instructions for action on the 23rd of May; and, besides, they felt that no reverse of fortune in the open field could be worse than what they were now suffering.

It appears that the plan of attack formed by Lord Edward Fitzgerald had been communicated to most of the insurgents; for their first open acts of hostility, though apparently fortuitous, irregular, and confused, bore evident marks of a deep-laid scheme for surprising the military by separate, though simultaneous attacks, to surround in a cordon the city of Dublin, and cut off all succours and resources from without. On that day (May 23rd) Mr. Neilson\* and some others

\* Mr. Neilson was seized between nine and ten in the evening, by Gregg, the keeper of Newgate, as he was reconnoitering the prison. A scuffle ensued, and Neilson snapped a pistol at him; by the intervention of two yeomen he was secured and committed. It is reported, and appears probable, that a large number of the conspirators who were awaiting his orders, having lost their leader, dispersed for that night.



of the leaders were arrested; and the city and county of Dublin were proclaimed by the Lord-Lieutenant and Council in a state of insurrection; the guards at the Castle and all the great objects of attack were trebled; and, in fact, the whole city was converted into a besieged garrison. Thus the insurgents were unable to effect anything by surprise. Without leaders, and almost without arms or ammunition, they ventured on the bloody contest, Notwithstanding the apparent forwardness of the North, the first commotions appeared in different parts of Leinster. The Northern and Connaught mail coaches were stopped by parties of the insurgents on the night of the 23rd of May; and, at about twelve o'clock on the morning of the 24th, a large body of insurgents attacked the town and jail of Naas, about fourteen miles from Dublin, where Lord Gosford commanded. As the guard had been seasonably increased, in expectation of such an attack, the assailants were repulsed and driven into a narrow avenue, where, without order or discipline, they sustained for some time the attack of the Armagh militia, and of the fencible corps raised by Sir Watkin William Wynne, and known by the name of the Ancient Britons. The King's troops lost two officers and about thirty men; and the insurgents, as was reported, lost 140 in the contest and their flight. They were completely dispersed, and several of them taken prisoners. On the same day, a small division of His Majesty's forces were surprised at the town of Prosperous; and a detachment at the village of Clane cut their way through to Naas, with considerable loss. About the same time, General Dundas encountered a large body of insurgents on the hills near Kilkullen, and 130 of them were left dead upon the field.

On the following day, a body of about 400 insurgents, under the command of two gentlemen of the names of Ledwich and Keough, marched from Rathfarnham, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, along the foot of the mountain towards Belgatt and Clondalkin. In their progress, they were met by a party of thirty-five dragoons, under the command of Lord Roden. After some resistance, the insurgents were defeated, great numbers were killed and wounded, and their leaders—Ledwich and Keough—were taken. They were immediately tried by a court-martial, and executed.

Although the first effort of the insurgents had been thus defeated, still they entertained the most sanguine hopes of succeeding in another attempt. General

Lake, who, upon the resignation of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief, published the following notice on the morning of the 24th of May:—

“Lieutenant-General Lake, commanding His Majesty's forces in this kingdom, having received from His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant, full powers to put down the rebellion, and to punish rebels in the most summary manner by martial law.” &c.

On the same morning, the Lord-Mayor of Dublin issued a proclamation to this effect:—

“Whereas, the circumstances of the present crisis demand every possible precaution, these are, therefore, to desire all persons who have registered arms forthwith to give in (in writing) an exact list or inventory of such arms at the Town Clerk's office, who will file and enter the same in a book to be kept for that purpose, and all persons who have not registered their arms are hereby required forthwith to deliver up to me, or some other of the magistrates of this city, all arms and ammunition of every kind in their possession; and if, after this proclamation, any person having registered their arms shall be found not to have given in a true list or inventory of such arms; or if any person who has not registered shall be found to have in their power or possession any arms or ammunition whatever, such person or persons will, on such arms being discovered, be forthwith sent on board His Majesty's navy, as by law directed.

“And I do hereby desire that all house-keepers do place upon the outside of their doors a list of all persons in their respective houses, distinguishing such as are strangers from those who actually make part of their family; but as there may happen to be persons who, from pecuniary embarrassments are obliged to conceal themselves, I do not require such names to be placed on the outside of the door, provided such names are sent to me. And I hereby call upon all His Majesty's subjects within the County of the City of Dublin immediately to comply with this regulation, as calculated for the public security; as those persons who shall willfully neglect a regulation so easy and salutary, as well as persons giving false statements of the inmates of their houses, must, in the present crisis, abide the consequences of such neglect.”

Parliament, being then in session, met as usual, and Lord Castlereagh presented to the House of Commons a message from the Lord-Lieutenant, that he thought it his indispensable duty, with



the advice of the Privy Council, under the present circumstances of the kingdom, to issue a proclamation, which he had ordered to be laid before the House of Commons, to whom he remarked, the time for speaking was now gone by, and that period at last come when deeds and not words were to show the dispositions of members of that House, and of every man who truly valued the Constitution of the land, or wished to maintain the laws, and protect the lives and properties of His Majesty's subjects. Everything which courage, honour, fortune, could offer in the common cause was now called for. The rebels had openly thrown off the mask, &c., &c.

Open war having now been fairly commenced, the Government proceeded to the strongest measures of coercion. Although by no public official act were the picquetings, stranglings, floggings, and torturings, to extort confessions, justified or sanctioned, yet it is universally known, that under the very eye of Government, and with more than their tacit permission, were these outrages practised. In mentioning the Irish Government, it is not meant that this system proceeded from its Chief Governor; it was boasted to have been extorted from him. And to this hour it is not only defended and justified, but panegyriized by the advocates and creatures of the furious drivers of that system of terrorism.

So far from their being any doubt of the existence of any such practices a short time previous to and during the rebellion, Sir Richard Musgrave has, in an additional appendix to his memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland, given to the public his observations upon whipping and free quarters. He admits, indeed, that whosoever considers it abstractedly, must, of course, condemn it as obviously repugnant to the letter of the law, the benign principles of our Constitution, and those of justice and humanity; but he was convinced that such persons as dispassionately considered the existing circumstances, and the pressure of the occasion under which it was adopted, would readily admit them to be, if not an excuse, at least an ample extenuation of that practice. "Suppose," says he, "the fullest information could have been obtained of the guilt of every individual, it would have been impracticable to arrest and commit the multitude. Some men of discernment and fortitude perceived that that some new expedient must be adopted to prevent the subversion of Government, and the destruction of society; and whipping was resorted to.

"As to the violation of the forms of the law by this practice, it should be recollected the law of nature, which suggested the necessity of it, supersedes all positive institutions, as it is imprinted on the heart of man for the preservation of his creatures, as it speaks strongly and instinctively, and as its end will be baffled by the slowness of deliberation.

"When the sword of civil war is drawn, the laws are silent. As to the violation of humanity, it should be recollected that nothing could exceed the cruelty of this banditti; that their object was the extirpation of the loyalists; that of the whippers, the preservation of the community at large.

"This practice was never sanctioned by Government, as they, on the contrary, used their utmost exertions to prevent it; and the evidence extorted from the person whipped never was used to convict any person, and was employed for no other reason but to discover concealed arms, and to defeat the deleterious schemes of the traitors. Free quarters were confined merely to the province of Leinster.

"When Government was possessed of the evidence that the inhabitants of a village or a town, who had taken the usual oaths to lull and deceive the magistrates, were possessed of concealed arms, and meditated an insurrection and massacre, they sent amongst them a certain number of troops, whom they were obliged to maintain by contributions levied on themselves. This took place a few days before the rebellion broke out.

"It has been universally allowed that the military severities practised in the county of Kildare occasioned a premature explosion of the plot, which the Directory intended to have deferred till the French effected a landing; and one of them, Mr. Emmet, declared in his evidence, upon oath, before the Secret Committee of the Lords, that, but for the salutary effects of those military severities, there would have been a very general and formidable insurrection in every part of the country."

This warm advocate for the torture has not with his usual minuteness favoured his reader with any instances of innocent persons having undergone this severe trial from wanton suspicion, personal revenge, or malevolent cruelty. Yet many such there were; as must necessarily be the case, where the very cast of a countenance that displeased a corporal or common yeoman sufficed to subject the unfortunate passenger to this military ordeal. No man can give credit to the assertion, that *Government used their utmost exertions to prevent it*, who knows anything of the



state of Ireland at that disastrous period. In Beresford's Riding House, Sandys' Prevot, the Old Custom House, the Royal Exchange, some of the barracks, and other places in Dublin, there were daily, hourly, notorious exhibitions of these torturings, as there also were in almost every town, village, or hamlet throughout the kingdom, in which troops were quartered.\*

Many attacks were made by the rebels on the second day of the rebellion (the 24th of May), generally with ill-success; the chief of which were those of Carlow, Hacketstown, and Monastereven. There were also several skirmishes near Rathfarnham, Tallagh, Lucan, Luske, Dunboyne, Barretstown, Collon, and Baltinaglass. At Dunboyne and Barretstown the insurgents are allowed to have had the advantage. But in all the other encounters, though greatly superior in numbers, they were defeated, with incredible loss of their men.

The non-arrival of the mail-coach at the usual hour of eight o'clock in the morning at Carlow, was to be the signal for rising there and its vicinity. This town lies about forty miles southwest of Dublin. Of the intended attack the garrison was apprised by an intercepted letter, and from Lieutenant Roe, of the North Cork militia, who had observed the peasants assembling in the vicinity late in the evening of the 24th of May. The garrison consisted in the whole of about four hundred and fifty men, commanded by Colonel Mahon of the Ninth Dragoons, and they were very judiciously posted for the reception of the assailants. A body, perhaps amounting to a thousand or fifteen hundred, having assembled before the house of Sir Edward Crosbie, a mile and a half distant from Carlow, marched into the town at two o'clock in the morning on the 25th of May, in a very unguarded and tumultuary manner, shouting as they rushed into Tullow Street, with vain confidence, that the town was their own: they received so destructive a fire from the garrison, that they recoiled and endeavoured to retreat; but finding their flight intercepted, numbers took refuge in the houses, which were immediately fired by the soldiery. About eighty houses, with some hundred men, were consumed in this conflagration. As about

half this column of assailants had arrived within the town, and few escaped from that situation, their loss can hardly be estimated at less than four hundred; while not a man was even wounded on the side of the King's troops.

After the defeat, executions commenced here, as they did elsewhere in this calamitous period, and about two hundred, in a short time, were hanged or shot, according to martial law. Amongst the earliest victims was Sir Edward Crosbie, before whose house the rebel column had assembled, but who certainly had not accompanied them in their march; he was condemned and shot as a United Irishman. Sir Edward Crosbie had no further connection with the rebels than that they exercised on a lawn before the house, which of course Sir Edward could not prevent.

In the attack upon Slane, a mere handful of troops, about seventeen yeomen and forty of the Armagh militia, although surprised in the houses on which they were billeted, fought their way separately to their rallying post, and then made so vigorous a stand, that some hundreds of the people were with considerable slaughter repulsed. Several of the assailants of this small town appeared dressed in the uniforms of the Cork Militia and Ancient Britons; which appearance in this and several other instances, proved a fatal deceit to the King's troops. They were the spoils taken at Prosperous; at which place the success of the insurgents, amongst other causes, was owing to their having been headed or led on to the attack by an officer; as their defeats in most other places, with immense superiority of numbers, were to be attributed to the want of some intelligent person to control and direct them. Their discomfitures in general were not the effect of fear or cowardice, but of want of discipline and organization.

Kildare County was not favourable to the insurgents, because it is generally a flat, grassy plain, where regular cavalry can act with terrible effect. Two weeks were sufficient to crush all insurrectionary movements in that county, and in Meath and Carlow. Yet in that short campaign splendid feats of gallantry were achieved by the half-armed peasantry. At Monastereven the insurgents were repulsed with some loss, the defenders of the place being in part "loyal" Catholics, commanded by one Cassidy. At Old Kilcullen the insurgents defeated and drove back the advance-guard of General Dundas, with the loss of twenty-two regular soldiers, including a Captain Erskine.

\* It is too large a credit to be allowed to this author's assertion, that *the evidence extorted from the person whipped never was used to convict any person*. If the security of the monarch is to be found in the affectionate hearts of his people, it is matter of important consideration how far these practices tended more to unite or separate the two kingdoms.



But after the first few days, there was in reality no insurrection at all in Kildare County; and the operations of the troops there, though called sometimes "battles," were nothing but onslaughts on disarmed fugitives—in other words, massacres. These proceedings were hailed with triumph in Dublin, as great military achievements. For example, the slaughter of the unresisting, capitulated people at the Gibbet Rath of Kildare, was regarded as a vigorous measure which the emergencies of the time required. The rebels, according to Sir R. Musgrave, amounted to about 3000 in number; they had entered into terms with General Dundas, and were assembled at a place that had been a Danish fort, called the Gibbet Rath. Having offered terms of submission to General Dundas on the 26th of May, that General dispatched General Welford to receive their arms and grant them protection. Before the arrival of the latter, however, on the 3rd of June, the multitude of unresisting people were suddenly attacked by Sir James Duff, who, having galloped into the plain, disposed his army in order of battle, and with the assistance of Lord Roden's fencible cavalry, fell upon the astonished multitude, as Sir Richard Musgrave states, "pell mell." Three hundred and fifty men, under term of capitulation, admitted into the King's peace and promised his protection, were mowed down in cold blood, at a place known to every peasant in Kildare as "the Place of Slaughter," as well remembered as Mullaghmast itself, the Gibbet Rath of the Curragh of Kildare.

The massacre took place on the 3rd of June; the terms of surrender were made by one Perkins, a rebel leader, on the part of the insurgents, and General Dundas, on the part of the Government, and with its express sanction and permission for them, on delivering up their arms, to return to their homes. Their leader and his brother were to be likewise pardoned and set at liberty.

It was when the people were assembled at the appointed place, to comply with these conditions, that Sir James Duff, at the head of 600 men, then on his march from Limerick, proceeded to the place to procure the surrendered weapons. One of the insurgents, before giving up his musket, discharged it in the air, barrel upwards; this simple act was immediately construed into a hostile proceeding, and the troops fell on the astonished multitude, and the latter fled with the utmost precipitation, and were pursued and slaughtered without mercy by a party

of fencible cavalry, called "Lord Jocelyn's Foxhunters." According to the Rev. James Gordon, upwards of 200 fell on this occasion; Sir R. Musgrave states 350.

"No part of the infamy of this proceeding," says Dr. Madden, "attaches to General Dundas. The massacre took place without his knowledge or his sanction. His conduct throughout the rebellion was that of a humane and brave man."

The brutal massacre on the Curragh is thus described by Lord Camden, the Lord-Lieutenant, in his dispatch to the Duke of Portland:—

"DUBLIN CASTLE, May 29th.

"My Lord,—I have only time to inform your grace, that I learn from General Dundas that the rebels in the Curragh of Kildare have laid down their arms, and delivered up a number of their leaders.

"By a dispatch I have this instant received, I have the further pleasure of acquainting your grace that Sir James Duff, who, with infinite alacrity and address, has opened the communication with Limerick, (that with Cork being already open,) had arrived at Kildare whilst the rebels had possession of it, completely routed them and taken the place.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"CAMDEN."

The same transaction is thus described by the chief actor:—

*Extract of a letter from Major-General Sir James Duff to Lieutenant-General Lake, dated Monastereven.*

"I marched from Limerick on Sunday morning with sixty dragoons, Dublin militia, three field pieces, and two curri- cle guns, to open the communication with Dublin, which I judged of the utmost importance to Government. By means of cars for the infantry, I reached this place in forty-eight hours. I am now, at seven o'clock this morning (Tuesday), marching to surround the town of Kildare, the headquarters of the rebels, with seven pieces of artillery, 150 dragoons, and 350 infantry, determined to make a dreadful example of the rebels. I have left the whole country behind me perfectly quiet and well protected by means of the troops and yeomanry corps.

"I hope to be able to forward this to you by the mail coach, which I will escort to Naas. I am sufficiently strong. You may depend on my prudence and success. My guns are well manned, and all the troops in high spirits. The cruelties the rebels have committed on some of the



officers and men have exasperated them to a great degree. Of my future operations I will endeavour to inform you.

"P.S.—KILDARE, two o'clock, P.M.—We found the rebels retiring from the town on our arrival, armed; we followed them with the dragoons. I sent on some of the yeomen to tell them, on laying down their arms, they should not be hurt. Unfortunately, some of them fired on the troops;\* from that moment they were attacked on all sides—nothing could stop the rage of the troops. I believe from two to three hundred of the rebels were killed. We have three men killed and several wounded. I am too much fatigued to enlarge."

There is no need to recount in detail the various slaughters done by the troops, sometimes upon armed insurgents, sometimes upon mere masses of unarmed people. These were all commemorated indifferently by Lord Camden in his despatches as "battles," "defeats of the rebels," and the like. One of his despatches describes the most serious part of the rising in Wicklow County:—

"DUBLIN CASTLE, May 26th, 10 A.M.

"My Lord,—I have detained a packet, in order to transmit to your grace the information received this morning.

"I have stated in a private letter to your grace, that a party of the rebels, to the amount of several hundreds, were attacked by a detachment of the Antrim Militia, a small party of cavalry, and Captain Stratford's yeomanry; and that, being driven into the town of Baltinglass, they lost about 150 men.

"This morning an account has been received from Major Hardy, that yesterday a body of between 3000 and 4000 had collected near Dunlavin, when they were entirely defeated, with the loss of 300 men, by Lieutenant Gardner, at the head of a detachment of Antrim Militia, and Captain Hardy's and Captain Hume's yeomanry.

"The troops and yeomanry behaved with the utmost gallantry in both actions."

On the same 26th of May another slaughter took place on Tara Hill, in

\* Plowden describes the affair thus: As the troops advanced near the insurgents to receive their surrendered weapons, one of the latter, foolishly swearing that he would not deliver his gun otherwise than empty, discharged it with the muzzle upwards.

Meath. Some chiefs of the Leinster insurgents had assembled at that point where they expected to be joined by a force coming from the North. They were here attacked, and after an obstinate defence, killing thirty-two of the soldiers and yeomanry, they were again overpowered, by discipline and superior arms. The issue is told in this despatch:—

*Extract of a letter from Captain Scobie, of the Reay Fencibles, to Lieutenant-General Lake, dated Dunshaughlin, Sunday morning, May 27th, 1798.*

"The division, consisting of five companies of His Majesty's Reay Regiment of Fencible Infantry, which I have the honour to command, arrived here yesterday morning according to route, accompanied by Lord Fingal's troop of yeomen cavalry, Captain Preston's and Lower Kells' troop of cavalry, and Captain Molloy's company of yeomen infantry.

"At half-past three P.M. I was informed that a considerable force of the rebel insurgents had taken station on Tara Hill. I instantly detached three companies of our division, with one field-piece, and the above corps of yeomanry, to the spot, under the command of Captain M'Lean, of the Reay's, the issue of which has answered my most sanguine expectation.

"The rebels fled in all directions; 350 were found dead on the field this morning, among whom is their commander in full uniform; many more were killed and wounded.

"Our loss is inconsiderable, being nine rank and file killed, sixteen rank and file wounded."

On the whole, it must be admitted that the troops found but little difficulty in crushing the insurgent peasants of Kildare, Dublin, and Meath. The slaughter of the people was out of all proportion with the resistance. The number of deaths arising from torture or massacre, where no resistance was offered during the year 1798, forms the far greater portion of the total number slain in this contest. The words of Mr. Gordon are:—"I have reason to think more men than fell in battle were slain in cold blood. No quarter was given to persons taken prisoners as rebels, *with or without arms.*"\*

In the meantime, events still more serious were taking place in Wexford County.

\* Gordon's History of the Rebellion.



## CHAPTER VI.

1798.

**Wexford a Peaceable County.**—Lord Castlereagh's Judicious Measures.—Catholics driven out of Yeomanry Corps.—Treatment of Mr. Fitzgerald.—United Irish in Wexford.—The Priests Oppose that Society.—How they were Required.—Miles Byrne.—Torture in Wexford.—Orangemen in Wexford.—North Cork Militia.—Hay's Account of the Ferocity of the Magistrates.—Massacre of Carnew.—Father John Murphy.—Burning of his Chapel.—Miles Byrne's Account of First Rising.—Oulard.—Storm of Enniscorthy.—Wexford Evacuated by the King's Troops.—Occupied by Insurgents.—All the County now in Insurrection. Estimated numbers of Insurgents.—Population of the County.

WEXFORD was one of the most peaceable counties in Ireland. Protestants and Catholics lived there in greater harmony than elsewhere; and had united in forming yeomanry corps for defence of the country after the attempted invasion under Hoche. The United Irish organization extended to that county as we know from Miles Byrne; but not with such power as in Meath and Kildare, for the very reason that the people were not, up to that time, subjected to such intolerable oppression. In the first months of 1798, however, everything was changed. Orders were given from the Castle to purify the yeomanry corps, by expelling those who should not take an oath that they were not United Irishmen. The oath was to the effect that they were neither United Irishmen nor Orangemen; but practically, the measure was so executed as to disarm none but Catholics, or such Protestants as were known to be liberal in their opinions, like Antony Perry, of Inch. Miles Byrne (the personal memoir of this gallant officer was published only in 1863) gives several examples:—

“White, of Bally-Ellis, raised a foot corps, and got great praise from the Government, as he had it equipped and armed when Hoche's expedition came to Bantry Bay in 1796.

“If this corps was one of the first that was ready to march, it was also one of the first to be disbanded and disarmed, for it was composed principally of Catholics, though the officers were Protestants.

“The corps of yeomanry cavalry, commanded by Beaumont, of Hyde Park, in which Antony Perry, of Inch, or Perry Mount, and Ford, of Ballyfad, were officers, refused to take any oath respecting their being Orangemen or United Irishmen, at the same time they resolved not to resign, but to continue their service

as usual. Soon after, the corps was ordered to assemble, when a regiment of militia was in waiting, and the suspected members were surrounded and disarmed; that is to say, all the Catholics, which were about one-half of the corps, with Perry and one or two other Protestants, being considered too liberal to make part of a corps that was henceforward to be upon the true Protestant, or Orange system.”

Edward Fitzgerald, of New Park, gives a sample of the proceedings which were carried on throughout the county from the moment of the formidable proclamation of martial law. He writes (*See Madden*):—

“Upon the 28th of April, 1798, my house, offices, and grounds, which are very considerable, were taken possession of by 120 cavalry and infantry, and 12 officers, who possessed themselves of all kinds of property within and without, and what they could not consume sent to Athy barracks. They continued in possession about thirty days, until the press of the times obliged them to change their position. Upon the approach of the military, my wife and family, of course, were obliged to fly my habitation, without the shortest previous intimation, and I was sent, under a military escort, to Dublin, where, after an arrest of ninety-one days, I was liberated, without the slightest specific charge of any kind. At the time of my arrest, I commanded as respectable a corps of cavalry as any in the kingdom, containing fifty-six in number, and not the slightest impropriety was ever attached to any of its members. From the time the military possessed themselves of my residence, the most iniquitous enormities were everywhere practised upon the people of the country; their houses plundered, their stock of all kinds seized, driven to the barracks, and sold by auction; their persons arrested, and sentenced to be flogged, at the arbitrary will of the most despicable wretches of the community. A man of the name of Thomas James Rawson, of the lowest order, the offal of a dunghill, had every person tortured and stripped, as his cannibal will directed. He would seat himself on a chair in the centre of a ring formed around the triangles, *the miserable victims kneeling under the triangle until they would be spotted over with the blood of the others.* People of the name of Cronin were thus treated. He made the father kneel under the son while flogging, the son under the father, &c.”

Why such a demoniac system was introduced amongst a peaceful people—



save to goad them into revolt—it is quite impossible to comprehend. Thousands of men who had avoided the United Irish Society before, now began to join it. The priests were still counselling patience and submission, and doing all in their power to make the people deliver up their pikes and other weapons. Miles Byrne says:—"The priests did everything in their power to stop the progress of the association of United Irishmen, particularly poor Father John Redmond, who refused to hear the confession of any of the United Irish, and turned them away from his knees. He was ill-requited afterwards for his great zeal and devotion to the enemies of his country; for after the insurrection was all over, Earl Mountnorris brought him in a prisoner to the British camp at Gorey, with a rope about his neck, hung him up to a tree, and fired a brace of bullets through his body. Lord Mountnorris availed himself of this opportunity to show his 'loyalty,' for he was rather suspected on account of not being at the head of his corps when the insurrection broke out in his neighbourhood. Both Redmond and the parish priest, Father Frank Cavanagh, were on the best terms with Earl Mountnorris, dining frequently with him at his seat, Camelon Park, which place Father Redmond prevented being plundered during the insurrection. This was the only part he had taken in the struggle."

Various kinds of torture were now habitually applied by the magistrates to extort confession of the two great crimes—having arms, or being United Irish, and the merest suspicion, or pretence of suspicion, was quite enough to cause a man to be half-hanged, flogged almost to death, or fitted with a pitch cap. Edward Hay gives a good general account of the methods by which the Wexford people were at last maddened to revolt:—

"The Orange system made no public appearance in the county of Wexford until the beginning of April, on the arrival there of the North Cork militia, commanded by Lord Kingsborough. In this regiment there were a great number of Orangemen, who were zealous in making proselytes and displaying their devices—having medals and Orange ribbons triumphantly pendant from their bosoms. It is believed that previous to this period there were but few actual Orangemen in the county; but soon after, those whose principles inclined that way, finding themselves supported by the military, joined the association, and publicly avowed themselves by assuming the devices of the fraternity.

"It is said that the North Cork regiment were also the inventors (but they certainly were the introducers) of pitch-cap torture into the county of Wexford. Any person having his hair cut short (and, therefore, called a *croppy*, by which appellation the soldiery designated an United Irishman), on being pointed out by some loyal neighbour, was immediately seized and brought into a guard-house, where caps, either of coarse linen or strong brown paper, besmeared inside with pitch, were always kept ready for service. The unfortunate victim had one of these, well heated, compressed on his head, and when judged of a proper degree of coolness, so that it could not be easily pulled off, the sufferer was turned out amidst the horrid acclamations of the merciless torturers; and to the view of vast numbers of people, who generally crowded about the guard-house door, attracted by the cries of the tormented. Many of those persecuted in this manner experienced additional anguish from the melted pitch trickling into their eyes. This afforded a rare addition of enjoyment to these keen sportsman, who reiterated their horrid yells of exultation on the repetition of the several accidents to which their game was liable from being turned out, for, in the confusion and hurry of escaping from the ferocious hands of these more than savage barbarians, the blinded victims frequently fell, or inadvertently dashed their heads against the walls in their way. The pain of disengaging this pitched cap from the head must be next to intolerable. The hair was often torn out by the roots, and not unfrequently parts of the skin were so scalded or blistered as to adhere and come off along with it. The terror and dismay that these outrages occasioned are inconceivable. A sergeant of the North Cork, nicknamed *Tom the Devil*, was most ingenious in devising new methods of torture. Moistened gunpowder was frequently rubbed into the hair cut close, and then set on fire. Some, while shearing for this purpose, had the tips of their ears snipped off. Sometimes an entire ear, and often both ears were completely cut off; and many lost part of their noses during the like preparation. But, strange to tell, these atrocities were publicly practised without the least reserve in open day, and no magistrate or officer ever interfered, but shamefully connived at this extraordinary mode of quieting the people! Some of the miserable sufferers on these shocking occasions, or some of their relations or friends, actuated by a principle of retaliation



tion, if not of revenge, cut short the hair of several persons, whom they either considered as enemies, or suspected of having pointed them out as objects for such desperate treatment.

"This was done with a view that those active citizens should fall in for a little experience of the like discipline, or to make the fashion of short hair so general that it might no longer be a mark of party distinction. Females were also exposed to the grossest insults from these military ruffians. Many women had their petticoats, handkerchiefs, caps, ribbons, and all parts of their dress that exhibited a shade of green (considered the national colour of Ireland), torn off, and their ears assailed by the most vile and indecent ribaldry. This was a circumstance so unforeseen, and of course so little provided against, that many women of enthusiastic loyalty suffered outrage in this manner.

"The proclamation of the County of Wexford having given greater scope to the ingenuity of magistrates to devise means of quelling all symptoms of rebellion, as well as of using every exertion to procure discoveries, they soon fell to the burning of houses wherein pikes, or other offensive weapons, were discovered, no matter how brought there; but they did not stop here, for the dwellings of suspected persons, and those from which any of the inhabitants were found to be absent at night, were also consumed. The circumstance of absence from the houses very generally prevailed throughout the country, although there were the strictest orders forbidding it. This was occasioned at first, as was before observed, from apprehension of the Orangemen, but afterwards proceeded from the actual experience of torture by the people from the yeomen and magistrates. Some, too, abandoned their houses for fear of being whipped, if, on being apprehended, confession satisfactory to the magistrates could neither be given or extorted; and this infliction many persons seemed to fear more than death itself. Many unfortunate men, who were taken in their houses, were strung up, as it were to be hanged, but were let down now and then to try if strangulation would oblige them to become informers. After these and the like experiments, several persons languished for some time, and at length perished in consequence of them. Smiths and carpenters, whose assistance was considered indispensable in the fabrication of pikes were pointed out on evidence of their trades as the first and fittest objects of torture. But the sagacity of some magis-

trates became at length so acute, from habit and exercise, that they *discerned* an United Irishman even at the first glance! And their zeal never suffered any person whom they designed to honour with such distinction to pass off without convincing proof of their attention.

"Mr. Hunter Gowan had for many years distinguished himself by his activity in apprehending robbers, for which he was rewarded with a pension of £100 per annum. Now exalted to the rank of a magistrate, and promoted to be captain of a corps of yeomanry, he was zealous in his exertions to inspire the people about Gorey with dutiful submission to the magistracy and a respectful awe of the yeomanry. On a public day in the week preceding the insurrection, the town of Gorey beheld the triumphal entry of Mr. Gowan, at the head of his corps, with his sword drawn and a human finger stuck on the point of it.

"With this trophy he marched into the town, parading up and down the streets several times, so that there was not a person in Gorey who did not witness this exhibition; while in the meantime the triumphant corps displayed all the devices of Orangemen. After the labour and fatigue of the day, Mr. Gowan and his men retired to a public house to refresh themselves, and, *like true blades of game*, their punch was stirred about with the finger that had *graced* their ovation, in imitation of keen fox hunters, who *whisk* a bowl of punch with the brush of a fox before their boozing commences. This captain and magistrate afterwards went to the house of Mr. Jones, where his daughters were, and while taking a snack that was set before him, he bragged of having blooded his corps that day, and that they were as staunch blood-hounds as any in the world. The daughters begged of their father to show them the crotchy finger, which he deliberately took from his pocket and handed to them. Misses dandled it about with senseless exultation, at which a young lady in the room was so shocked that she turned about to a window, holding her hand to her face to avoid the horrid sight. Mr. Gowan, perceiving this, took the finger from his daughters, and *archly* dropped it into the disgusted lady's bosom. She instantly fainted, and thus the scene ended!!!

"Having spent Friday, the 25th of May, with Mr. Turner, a magistrate of the county, at Newfort, he requested me to attend him next day at Newpark, the seat of Mr. Fitzgerald, where, as the most central place, he had appointed to meet



the people of the neighbourhood. I accordingly met him there on Saturday, the 26th, where he continued the whole day administering the oath of allegiance to vast numbers of people. A certificate was given to every person who took the oath and surrendered any offensive weapon. Many attended who offered to take the oath, and also to depose that they were not United Irishmen, and that they possessed no arms of any kind whatever, and earnestly asked for certificates. But so great was the concourse of these, that, considering the trouble of writing them out, it was found impossible to supply them all with such testimonials at that time. Mr. Turner, therefore, continued to receive surrendered arms, desiring such as had none to await a more convenient opportunity. Numbers, however, still conceiving that they would not be secure without a written protection, offered ten times their intrinsic value to such as had brought pike blades to surrender; but these being unwilling to forego the benefit of a written protection for the moment, refused to part with their weapons on any other condition. Among the great numbers assembled on this occasion were some men from the village of Ballaghkeen, who had the appearance of being more dead than alive, from the apprehensions they were under of having their houses burned or themselves whipped should they return home. These apprehensions had been excited to this degree because that, on the night of Thursday, the 24th, the Enniscorthy cavalry, conducted by Mr. Archibald Hamilton Jacob, had come to Ballaghkeen; but, on hearing the approaching noise, the inhabitants ran out of their houses, and fled into large brakes of furze on a hill immediately above the village, from whence they could hear the cries of one of their neighbours, who was dragged out of his house, tied up to a thorn tree, and while one yeoman continued flogging him, another was throwing water on his back. The groans of the unfortunate sufferer, from the stillness of the night, reverberated widely through the appalled neighbourhood; and the spot of execution these men represented to have appeared next morning 'as if a pig had been killed.'\*\*

On the 25th of May was perpetrated the massacre of Carnew. A large number of prisoners had been shut up in the jail of that place, on suspicion of being guilty of possessing arms, or of knowing some one who possessed arms. These prisoners were all taken out of the jail and

deliberately shot in the Ball Alley, by the yeomen and a party of the Antrim Militia, in *presence of their officers.*†

Father John Murphy was curate of Monageer and Boolevogue. He was a gentleman of learning and accomplishments, having studied in the University of Seville. He had now been resident several years, quietly doing the sacred duties of his calling, enjoying the esteem of all his neighbours, and little dreaming that it was to fall to his lot to head an insurrection. Miles Byrne, who knew him well, narrates with much simplicity the story of the good priest's first act of war:—

"The Reverend John Murphy, of the parish of Monageer and Boolevogue, was a worthy, simple, pious man, and one of those Roman Catholic priests who used the greatest exertions and exhortations to oblige the people to surrender their pikes and fire-arms of every description. As soon as the cowardly yeomanry thought that all the arms were given up, and that there was no further risk, they took courage, and set out, on Whit Saturday, the 26th of May, 1798, burning and destroying all before them. Poor Father John, seeing his chapel and his house, and many others of the parish, all on fire, and in several of them the inhabitants consumed in the flames, and that no man seen in coloured clothes could escape the fury of the yeomanry, betook himself to the next wood, where he was soon surrounded by the unfortunate people who had escaped; all came beseeching his reverence to tell them what was to become of them and their poor families. He answered them abruptly, that they had better die courageously in the field than be butchered in their houses; that, for his own part, if he had any brave men to join him, he was resolved to sell his life dearly, and prove to those cruel monsters that they should not continue their murders and devastations with impunity. All answered and cried out that they were determined to follow his advice, and to do whatever he ordered. 'Well, then,' he replied, 'we must, when night comes, get armed the best way we can, with pitch-forks and other weapons, and attack the Camolen Yeomen Cavalry on their way back to Earl Mountnorris, where they will return to pass the night, after satisfying their savage rage on the defenceless country people.'

"Father John's plan was soon put in execution. He went to the high road by which the corps was to return, left a few men near a house, with instructions

\* Edward Hay.

\* Hay, Madden.



to place two cars across the road the moment the last of the cavalry had passed, and at a short distance from thence, half a quarter of a mile, he made a complete barricade across the highway, and then placed all those brave fellows who followed him behind a hedge along the road-side; and in this position he waited to receive this famous yeomanry cavalry, returning from being glutted with all manner of crimes during this memorable day, the 26th of May, 1798.

"About nine o'clock at night, this corps, riding in great speed, encountered the above-mentioned obstacle on the road, and were at the same moment attacked from front to rear by Father John and his brave men, with their pitch-forks. The cavalry, after discharging their pistols, got no time to reload them, or to make much use of their sabres. In short, they were literally lifted out of their saddles, and fell dead under their horses' feet. Lieutenant Booky, who had the command in the absence of Earl Mountnorris, was one of the first killed; he was a sanguinary villain, and it seemed a just judgment that befell them all. But, be that as it may, Father John and his men were much elated with their victory, and getting arms, ammunition, and horses by it, considered themselves formidable, and able at least to beat the cruel yeomanry in every encounter. They marched at once to Camoln Park, the residence of Lord Mountnorris, where they got a great quantity of arms of every description, and which had been taken from the country people for months before; and even the carbines belonging to the corps, and which had not been distributed, waiting the arrival of the Earl from Dublin.

"During the night, and the next day, Whit Sunday, the 27th of May, the people flocked in to join Father John's standard, on hearing of his success; and as soon as the news was known in Gorey, the troops took fright and abandoned the town, letting the prisoners go where they pleased; but finding that Father John had marched in another direction, they returned and resumed their persecutions as before; they again arrested great numbers and had them placed in the market-house loft, ready to be butchered the moment the insurgents made their appearance before the town. Poor Perry was amongst the prisoners, and in a dreadful state, having the skin as well as the hair burned off his head. Esmond Cane was arrested that day and made a prisoner."

Father John might now have marched into Wicklow County without much opposition, "but," continues Miles Byrne,

"he thought it would be more advisable to raise the whole county of Wexford first, and get possession of the principal towns. In consequence of this decision, on Whit Sunday, the 27th of May, he marched with all his forces, then amounting to four or five thousand men, to Oulard Hill, a distance of ten miles from Wexford, and five from Enniscorthy. He encamped on this hill for the purpose of giving an opportunity to the unfortunate people who were hiding to come and join him. He soon perceived several corps of yeomanry cavalry in sight, but all keeping at a certain distance from the hill, waiting until the infantry from Wexford arrived to make the first attack.

"Shortly after, he saw a large force on the march, flanked by some cavalry, and as soon as they began to mount the hill, Father John assembled his men and showed them the different corps of cavalry that were waiting, he said, 'to see us dispersed by the foot troops, to fall on us and to cut us in pieces; but let us remain firm together and we shall surely defeat the infantry, and then we shall have nothing to dread from the cavalry, as they are too great cowards to venture into the action.' All promised to conform to his instructions. 'Well, then,' he rejoined, 'we must march against the troops that are mounting the hill, and when they are deployed and ready to begin the attack, we must retreat precipitately back to where we are, and then throw ourselves down behind this old ditch,' pointing to a boundary on the top of the hill. All his instructions were executed as he had ordered.

"The King's troops were commanded by Colonel Foote and Major Lombard, and as soon as they came within about two musket-shots of the insurgents, they deployed and prepared for action, but became enraged when they saw the insurgents retreating back to the top of the hill; however, they followed quickly, knowing that the hill was completely surrounded by the several corps of yeomanry cavalry, and that it was impossible for the insurgents to escape before they came in with them.

"Father John allowed the infantry to come within half musket-shot of the ditch, and then a few men on each flank and in the centre stood up, at the sight of which the whole line of infantry fired a volley. Instantly, Father John and all his men sallied out and attacked the soldiers, who were in the act of re-charging their arms; and although they made the best fight they



could with their muskets and bayonets, they were soon overpowered and completely defeated by the pikemen, or rather by the men with pitch-forks and other weapons; for very few had pikes at this battle, on account of having given them up by the exhortations and advice of the priests.

"Of this formidable expedition, which was sent from Wexford on the 27th of May to exterminate the insurgents, very few returned to bring the woeful tidings of their defeat, and the glorious victory obtained by the people over their cruel tyrants. Of the North Cork party that had been the scourge of the country for several months previous, and so distinguished for making Orangemen, hanging, picqueting, putting on pitch-caps, &c., Major Lombard, the Honourable Captain De Courcy, Lieutenants Williams, Ware, Barry, and Ensign Keogh, with all the privates but two, were left dead on the field of battle. In short, none escaped except Colonel Foote, a sergeant, a drummer, and the two privates mentioned above. The insurgents had but three killed and five or six wounded. The Shilmalier Cavalry, commanded by Col. Lehunt, as well as the different corps of cavalry that surrounded the hill during the battle, and which did not take any part in the action, in their precipitate retreat to Wexford, Enniscorthy, and Gorey, shot every man they met on the road, went to the houses, called the people to their doors and put them to death; many who were asleep shared the same fate, their houses being mostly burned.

"Solomon Richards, commander of the Enniscorthy Cavalry, and Hawtry White, who commanded all the troops of cavalry sent from Gorey to exterminate the people, surpassed description. They little thought, however, that for every one they put to death in cold blood, they were sending thousands to join the insurgent camp.

"Father John and his little army now became quite flushed with their last victory. Seeing the King's troops flying and escaping in every direction, they were at a loss to know which division they should pursue; they, however (having as yet no cavalry), marched from Oulard Hill and encamped for the night on Carrigrew Hill. Next morning, the 28th of May, at seven o'clock, they marched to Camolen, and from thence to Ferns. Not meeting with any of the King's troops in this town to oppose them, and having learned that they had retreated to Gorey and to Enniscorthy, Father John resolved at once to attack this last town, in order to afford a better

opportunity to the brave and unfortunate country people to escape from their hiding places and come and join his standard, he and his little army crossed the Slaney by the bridge at Scarawalsh; and certainly this skilful manœuvre or counter-march had the happiest result; for immediately on crossing the river he was joined by crowds."

On their arrival before Enniscorthy, the insurgents amounted to the number of 7000 men, 800 of whom were armed with guns, which they had seized at Camolen almost immediately after they had been sent to that place by the Earl of Mountnorris. About one o'clock on the 28th of May, Enniscorthy was attacked by this vast multitude, and after a vigorous defence by the comparatively small garrison, was left in possession of the insurgents. The garrison retreated and fell back on Wexford; they lost above ninety of their men, and the town was on fire in several places. They were attended by a confused number of unfortunate loyal inhabitants, but were not pursued by the insurgents, who might have easily cut off their retreat.

To disperse the insurgents, if possible, without battle or concession, or perhaps to divert their attention and retard their progress, an expedient was essayed by Captain Boyd, of the Wexford Cavalry. This officer had, in consequence of a requisition to that purpose of the sheriff and other gentlemen, on the 25th and 27th, from information or suspicion of treasonable designs, arrested Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey, of Bargy Castle, John Henry Colclough, of Ballyteigue, and Edward Fitzgerald, of New Park, all three respectable gentlemen of the county of Wexford. Visiting them in prison on the 29th, Captain Boyd agreed with these gentlemen, that one of them should go to the rebels at Enniscorthy, and endeavour to persuade them to disperse and return to their homes, but would not give authority to promise any terms to the insurgents in case of submission. Colclough, at the request of Mr. Harvey, agreed to go on condition of his being accompanied by Mr. Fitzgerald. On the arrival of these two gentlemen at Enniscorthy, about four in the afternoon of the same day, they found the insurgents in a state of confusion, distracted in their councils, and undetermined in any plan of operation; some proposing to attack Newtownbarry, others Ross, others Wexford, others to remain in their present posts; the greater number to march home for the defence of their houses against Orangemen.



It was but the resolution of a moment to march in a body to attack Wexford. Mr. Fitzgerald they detained in the camp, and Mr. Colclough they sent back to announce their hostile intentions.

Mr. Colclough arrived in Wexford early in the evening, and waited in the Bull Ring (a small square in the town so denominated) until the officers and other gentlemen in the place had there assembled, when he informed them, in a very audible voice, from horseback, that having gone out, according to directions, to the insurgents on Vinegar Hill, he found as he had already suggested before his departure, that he possessed no influence with the people, who had ordered him to return and announce their determination of marching to the attack of Wexford; adding that they had detained Mr. Fitzgerald. Mr. Colclough then requested to be informed, if it were intended to make further trial of his services, or require his longer attendance, as otherwise they must be sensible how eager he must be to relieve the anxiety of his family by his presence. He was then entreated to endeavour to maintain tranquility in his own neighbourhood, which having promised to do, as much as in his power, he called at the jail to visit Mr. Harvey, with whom he had agreed (according to the compact with Captain Boyd) to return next day and take his place in the jail, and then set off through the barony of Forth, for his own dwelling at Ballyteigue, distant about ten miles from Wexford.

Early in the morning of the 29th, Col. Maxwell, of the Donegal Militia, with two hundred men of his regiment and a six-pounder, arrived in Wexford from Duncannon Fort, despatched by General Fawcett, who had been apprised of the insurrection on the 27th, by Captain Knox, an officer sent to escort Sergeant Stanley, a judge of assize, on his way to Munster. This reinforcement being insufficient, an express was sent from the Mayor of Wexford to the General, requesting an additional force; he expeditiously returned with an exhilarating answer, that the General himself would commence his march for Wexford on the same evening, from Duncannon, with the Thirteenth Regiment, four companies of the Meath Militia, and a party of artillery with two howitzers. On the receipt of this intelligence, Colonel Maxwell, leaving the five passes into the town guarded by the yeomen and North Cork Militia, took post with his men on the Windmill Hill, above the town, at day-break on the following morning, the 30th,

with the resolution to march against the enemy on the arrival of General Fawcett's army.

That General had marched according to his promise on the evening of the 29th; but halting at Taghmon, seven miles from Wexford, he had sent forward a detachment of eighty-eight men, including eighteen of the artillery, with the howitzers, under the command of Captain Adams, of the Meath Militia. This detachment was intercepted early in the morning of the 30th, by the insurgents, under the Three Rocks, which they had occupied as a military station, being about three miles from Wexford, the howitzers were taken and almost the whole party slain.\*

Colonel Maxwell, informed of the destruction of Captain Adams' detachment, by two officers who had escaped the slaughter, advanced immediately with what forces he could collect, with design to retake the howitzers, and co-operate with General Fawcett, of whose retreat he had no suspicion, but observing his left flank exposed by the retreat of some of the Taghmon cavalry, and the enemy making a motion to surround him, he retired to Wexford, with the loss of Lieutenant-Colonel Watson killed, and two privates wounded.

Everything now wore the aspect of a gloomy, desperate consternation. Some yeomen and supplementaries, posted nearly opposite the jail were heard continually to threaten to put all the prisoners to death, which so roused the attention of the jailer to protect his charge, that he barricaded the door, and delivered up the key to Mr. Harvey. Some magistrates were admitted to see Mr. Harvey in the jail, and, at their most urgent entreaties, he wrote the following notice to the insurgents:—

"I have been treated in prison with all possible humanity, and am now at liberty. I have procured the liberty of all the prisoners. If you pretend to Christian charity, do not commit massacre, or burn the property of the inhabitants, and spare your prisoners' lives.

"B. B. HARVEY.

"*Wednesday, May 30th, 1798.*"

\* The following official account was given of this affair:—

"DUBLIN CASTLE, June 2nd, 1798.

"Accounts have been received from Major General Eustace, at New Ross, stating that Major General Fawcett having marched with a company of the Meath regiment from Duncannon Fort, this small force was surrounded by a very large body between Taghmon and Wexford, and defeated. General Fawcett effected his retreat to Duncannon Fort."



Counsellor Richards, with his brother, then undertook to announce the surrender of the town to the insurgents, whose camp they reached in safety, though clad in full uniform. Scarcely had these deputies set out upon their mission, when all the military corps, a part of the Wexford infantry under Captain Hughes only excepted, made the best of their way out of town in whatever direction they imagined they could find safety, without acquainting their neighbours on duty of their intentions. The principal inhabitants, whose services had been accepted of for the defence of the town, were mostly Catholics, and, according to the prevalent system, were subject to the greatest insults and taunts. They were always placed in front of the posts, and cautioned to behave well, or that death should be the consequence. Accordingly, persons were placed behind to keep them to their duty, and these were so watchful of their charge, that they would not even permit them to turn about their heads. Thus were the armed inhabitants left at their post, abandoned by their officers, and actually ignorant of the flight of the soldiery, until all impossible means of retreating were cut off. Upon the approach of the insurgents, the confusion and dismay were excessive, the few remaining officers and privates ran confusedly through the town, threw off their uniforms, and hid themselves wherever their fears suggested. Some ran for boats to convey them off, and threw their arms and ammunition into the water. Some, from an insufficiency of men's clothes, assumed female attire for the purpose of disguise. Extreme confusion, tumult, and panic were everywhere exhibited. The North Cork regiment, on quitting the barracks, had set them on fire, but the fire was soon after put out.

In the meantime, Mr. Richards having arrived at the Three Rocks, made it known to the insurgent chiefs, that they were deputed to inform the people that the town would be surrendered to them, on condition of sparing lives and properties; these terms, they were informed, would not be complied with unless the arms and ammunition of the garrison were also surrendered. Mr. Loftus Richards was, therefore, detained as a hostage, and Counsellor Richards and Mr. Fitzgerald were sent back to the town to settle and arrange the articles of capitulation. These gentlemen, on their arrival, to their astonishment, found the place abandoned by the military. A multitude of insurgents was just ready to pour in and take unconditional possession of the

town. It was therefore thought necessary to treat with them, in order to prevent the consequences apprehended from such a tumultuary influx of people. Dr. Jacob, then Mayor of the town and Captain of the Wexford Infantry, entreated Mr. Fitzgerald to announce to the people rushing in, that the town was actually surrendered; and to use every argument that his prudence might suggest to make their entry as peaceable as possible. Mr. Fitzgerald complied, and instantly after this communication, thousands of people poured into the town, over the wooden bridge, shouting and exhibiting all the marks of extravagant and victorious exultation. They first proceeded to the jail, released all the prisoners, and insisted that Mr. Harvey should become their commander. All the houses in town, not abandoned by the inhabitants, now became decorated with green boughs, and other emblematic symbols. The doors were universally thrown open, and the most liberal offers made of spirits and drink, which, however, were not as freely accepted, until the persons offering them had first drank themselves, as a proof that the liquor was not poisoned—a report having prevailed to that effect.

The insurgents being in possession of the town, several of the yeomen, having thrown off their uniforms, affected, with all the signs and emblems of the United Irishmen, to convince them of their unfeigned cordiality and friendship; those who did not throw open their doors with offers of refreshment and accommodation to the insurgents, suffered by plunder, their substance being considered as enemy's property. The house of Captain Boyd was a singular exception. It was, though not deserted, pillaged.

Those troops who had fled from Wexford signalized themselves in their retreat by plundering and devastating the country; by burning the cabins and shooting the peasantry in their progress; and thus they augmented the number and rage of the insurgents. These excesses were seen from the insurgents' station at the Three Rocks, and it was with extreme difficulty that the enraged multitude were hindered by their chiefs from rushing down upon Wexford, and taking summary vengeance of the town and its inhabitants.

The whole county of Wexford was now in open insurrection. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the people had taken to the field because their houses were mostly burned down, and had collected themselves into masses, with such poor arms as they had, for



their common protection. The aggregate numbers of persons, whether insurgents or fugitives, with their crowds of women and children, far exceeded the numbers of fighting men that the county could furnish. The population of Wexford at that time did not much, if at all, exceed one hundred and fifty thousand persons.\* The men who were properly of fighting age, therefore, were not more than thirty thousand. Sir Jonah Barrington has estimated the whole number of those who rose in this county at thirty-five thousand; but even to attain this amount, there must have been counted many thousands of old men, women, and children, besides many thousands more who were unarmed, or only half-armed. These straggling multitudes, then, without camp equipage, or accoutrements, or artillery (except a few ship-guns, not mounted, and some captured field-pieces), were now committed to a desperate struggle against the force of a powerful empire, well supplied with everything, and led by veteran generals. The only wonder to those who read this narration will be, not that they were finally overpowered, but that they achieved such successes, as for a time they certainly did. If the other thirty-one counties had done as well as Wexford, there would have been that year an end to British dominion.

## CHAPTER VII.

1798.

**Camp on Vinegar Hill.**—Actions at Ballycannoo.—At Newtownbarry.—Tubberneering.—Fall of Walpole.—Two Columns.—Bagenal Harvey Commands Insurgents.—Summons New Ross to Surrender.—Battle of New Ross.—Slaughter of Prisoners.—Retaliation.—Scullabogue.—Bagenal Harvey Shocked by affair of Scullabogue.—Resigns Command.—Father Philip Roche General.—Fight at Arklow.—Claimed as a Victory by King's Troops.—Account of it by Miles Bryne.—The Insurgents Execute some Loyalists in Wexford Town.—Dixon.—Retaliation.—Proclamation by "People of Wexford."—Lord Kingsborough a prisoner.—Troops Concentrated round Vinegar Hill.—Battle of Vinegar Hill.—Enniscorthy and Wexford Recovered.—Military Executions.—Ravage of the Country.—Chiefs Executed in Wexford.—Treatment of Women.—Outrages in the North of the County.—Fate of Father John Murphy's Column.—Of Antony Perry's.—Combat at Ballyellis.—Miles Bryne's Account of it.—Extermination of Ancient Britons.—Character of Wexford Insurrection.—Got up by the Government.

WHILE the insurgents were holding the town of Wexford, two large "encampments" of them were formed, one at

Carrigrew Hill, the other at Carrickbyrne, within six miles of the town of New Ross, situated on the large river Nore, and commanding the main passage into the county of Kilkenny. Their principal head-quarters was still at Vinegar Hill, close by Enniscorthy, situated on the Slaney. They made some rough entrenchments round this hill, and placed a few guns in position there. They then stationed a large garrison in the town, which was relieved every day by a fresh party from the camp. Such great numbers of the exasperated of the people from the adjacent country flocked to their camp that it soon consisted of at least ten thousand men, women, and children. They posted strong picket-guards, sentinels, and videttes in all the avenues leading to the town, and for some miles round it. They then proceeded to destroy the interior of the church of Enniscorthy.\*

A body of more than one thousand insurgents, in advancing towards Gorey, on the 1st of June, had taken possession of a small village called Ballycannoo, four miles to the south of Gorey, and were proceeding to take possession of an advantageous post called Ballymana Hill, midway between the village and the town, when they were met by the whole of the small garrison of Gorey, and by a steady and well-directed fire the people were soon completely routed. This victorious band, on their return to Gorey, fired most of the houses at Ballycannoo, and entered the town in triumph, with one hundred horses and other spoil which they had taken. In this, as in every other engagement at the beginning of the rebellion, the insurgents elevated their guns too much for execution, which accounts for the paucity of the slain on the part of the King's troops. On this occasion three only were wounded, and none killed. The insurgents are said to have lost above three score.†

\* This was done strictly in retaliation for the burning and wrecking of Catholic chapels. There were, on the whole, sixty-nine Catholic chapels destroyed during the insurrection; more than thirty in Wexford alone.—*Plowden*.

† The Rev. Mr. Gordon recounts [page 136] an occurrence after the battle, of which his son was a witness, which greatly illustrates the state of the country at that time: "Two yeomen, coming to a brake or clump of bushes, and observing a small motion, as if some persons were hiding there, one of them fired into it, and the shot was answered by a most piteous and loud shriek of a child. The other yeoman was then urged by his companion to fire; but he, being a gentleman, and less ferocious, instead of firing commanded the concealed persons to appear, when a poor woman and eight children, almost naked, one of whom was severely wounded, came trembling from the brake, where they had secreted themselves for safety."

\* In 1841, it was 202,033. In 1851, it was 180,159. —*Thom's Almanac*.



This success, coupled with that at Newtownbarry, gave a momentary check to the ardour of the people. A party from Vinegar Hill surrounded this latter town in such a manner that Colonel L'Estrange at first abandoned it. After a retreat of about a mile, he yielded to the solicitations of Lieutenant-Colonel Westenra, and suffered the troops to be led back to the succour of a few determined loyalists, who had remained in the town, and continued a fire from some houses. This accidental manœuvre had all the advantages of a preconcerted stratagem. The insurgents who had rushed into the street in a confused multitude, totally unapprehensive of the return of the troops, were unprepared, and driven out of the town with the loss of about two hundred men.\*

On advice received at Newtownbarry of the attack intended by the insurgents, an express had been sent to Clonegall, two miles and a half distant, ordering the troops posted there to march immediately to Newtownbarry. The commander of these troops, Lieutenant Young, of the Donegal Militia, instead of marching immediately, spent two hours in hanging four prisoners, in spite of the urgent remonstrance of an officer of the North Cork, who considered these men as not deserving death—some of them having actually declined to join the insurgents when it was fully in their power. By this delay, and an unaccountable circuitous march—three miles longer than the direct road—the troops did not arrive at Newtownbarry till after the action was entirely over. Mr. Young, on his arrival at Clonegall, had commanded the inhabitants to furnish every individual of his soldiers with a feather bed, and had, without the least necessity, turned Mr. Derenzy, a brave and loyal gentleman, and his children, out of their beds. When remonstrances were made to this officer for the incessant depredations of his men, his answer was: "I am the commanding officer, and damn the croppies."†

The insurgents had taken post on Corrigrua Hill in great force, where they rested on their arms till the 4th of June. Meantime, the long and anxiously expected army under General Loftus arrived at Gorey. The sight of fifteen hundred fine troops, with five pieces of artillery, filled the loyalists with confidence. The plan was to march the army in two divisions, by different roads on Corrigrua,

and attack the enemy in conjunction with other troops. The insurgents were in the meantime preparing to quit Corrigrua, and to march to Gorey. Information had been received by the insurgent chiefs of the intended motions of the army, and they acted upon it. Both armies marched about the same time; that of the insurgents surprised a division under Colonel Walpole, at a place called Tubberneering. The insurgents instantly poured a tremendous fire from the fields on both sides of the road, and Walpole received a bullet through the head early in the action. His troops fled in the utmost disorder, leaving their cannon, consisting of two six-pounders and a smaller piece, in the hands of the people. They were pursued as far as Gorey in their flight, through which they were galled by the fire of some of the insurgents, who had taken station in the houses. The loyalists of Gorey once more fled to Arklow with the routed army, leaving all their effects behind.

Miles Byrne, who was in this bloody action of Tubberneering (or Clough), generously pays a tribute to the gallantry of the unfortunate Walpole. He says:—

"It is only justice to the memory of this unfortunate man to say that he displayed the bravery of a soldier, and fought with the greatest perseverance in his critical situation; but he was soon overpowered by our men, now so flushed with victory that nothing could retard their march onward. Walpole was nearly surrounded by our forces, that outflanked him before he fell. We saw him lying dead on the road, and he had the appearance of having received several gunshot wounds. His horse lay dead beside him, with a number of private soldiers, dead and wounded. His troops now fled in great disorder, and could not be rallied: they were taken by dozens in the fields and on the road to Gorey. After they had thrown away their arms, accoutrements, and everything to lighten them, they were yet overtaken by our pikemen. It was curious to see many of them with their coats turned inside out. They thought, no doubt, by this sign of disaffection to the English that, when made prisoners, they would not be injured. But this manœuvre was unnecessary, for I never heard of a single instance of a prisoner being ill-treated during those days of fighting. Our men were in too good-humour to be cruel after the victory they had obtained."

While Walpole's division was attacked by the enemy, General Loftus, being within hearing of the musketry, de-

\* The light in which this conduct of the commanding officer at Newtownbarry was set forth in the official bulletin, was, that he at first retreated in order to collect his forces.

† Gord., 2 edit., p. 151.



tached seventy men—the grenadier company of the Antrim militia—across the fields to its assistance; but they were intercepted, and almost all killed or taken. The General, still ignorant of the fate of Colonel Walpole's division, and unable to bring his artillery across the fields, continued his march along the highway, by a long circuit, to the field of battle, where he was first acquainted with the event. For some way he followed the insurgents towards Gorey, but finding them posted on Gorey Hill, from which they fired upon him the cannon taken from Colonel Walpole, he retreated to Carnew; and still, contrary to the opinion of most of his officers, thinking Carnew an unsafe post, though at the head of twelve hundred effective men, he abandoned that part of the county to the insurgents, and retreated nine miles further, to the town of Tullow, in the county of Carlow.

Whilst one formidable body of the Wexford insurgents was advancing towards the north, another still more formidable was preparing to penetrate to the south-west. The conquest of New Ross, which is situated on the river formed by the united streams of the Nore and the Barrow, would have laid open a communication with the counties of Waterford and Kilkenny, in which many thousands were supposed ready to rise in arms at the appearance of their successful confederates. The possession of that important post, when it might have been effected without opposition immediately upon their success at Enniscorthy, had, fortunately for the royal cause, been abandoned, on account of a personal difference amongst their chiefs. The insurgent army of Wexford choose Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey,\* as soon as he was liberated from prison, for their generalissimo, and they divided into two main bodies, one of which directed its course northward to Gorey; the other, which was headed by Harvey in person, took post on Carrickburn mountain, within six miles

of Ross, where it was reviewed and organized till the 4th of June, when it marched to Corbet Hill, within a mile of that town, which it was intended to attack the next morning. Harvey, though neither destitute of personal courage, nor of a good understanding, possessed no military experience, much less those rare talents by which an undisciplined multitude may be directed and controlled. He formed the plan of an attack on three different parts of the town at once, which would probably have succeeded had it been put in execution. Having sent a summons to General Johnson, the commander of the King's troops, with a flag of truce, to surrender the town, the bearer of it, one Furlong, was shot by a sentinel of an outpost.\* Whilst Harvey was arranging his forces for the assault, they were galled by the fire of some outposts. He ordered a brave young man, of the name of Kelly, to put himself at the head of five hundred men, and drive in the outposts. Kelly was followed confusedly by a much greater number than he wished. He executed his commission, but could not bring back the men, as ordered. They rushed impetuously into the town, drove back the cavalry with slaughter on the infantry, seized the cannon, and being followed in their successful career by crowds from the hills, seemed some time nearly masters of the town. From a full persuasion of a decided victory in favour of the insurgent army, some officers of the garrison fled to Waterford, twelve miles distant, with the alarming intelligence.

The original plan of attack was thus defeated by this premature, though successful onset, in one quarter. The Dublin and Donegal Militia maintained their posts at the market-house, and at a station called Fairgate, and prevented the insurgents from penetrating into the centre of

\* To shoot all persons carrying flags of truce from the insurgents, appears to have been a maxim with His Majesty's forces. In Furlong's pocket was found the following letter of summons to General Johnson:—

"SIR—As a friend to humanity, I request you will surrender the town of Ross to the Wexford forces, now assembled against that town. Your resistance will but provoke rapine and plunder, to the ruin of the most innocent. Flushed with victory, the Wexford forces, now innumerable and irresistible, will not be controlled if they meet with resistance. To prevent, therefore, the total ruin of all property in the town, I urge you to a speedy surrender, which you will be forced to in a few hours, with loss and bloodshed, as you are surrounded on all sides. Your answer is required in four hours. Mr Furlong carries this letter, and will bring the answer.—I am, Sir,

"B. B. HARVEY,

"General Commanding, &c., &c., &c.

"Camp at Corbett Hill, half-past three o'clock in the morning, June 5, 1798."

\* The following was the form of their appointment:—

"At a meeting of the commanders of the United Army, held at Carrickburn camp, on 1st of June, 1798, it was unanimously agreed Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey should be appointed and elected commander-in-chief of the United Army of the County of Wexford, from and after the first day of June, 1798.

"Signed, by order of the different commanding officers of the camp,

"NICHOLAS GRAY, Secretary.

"It was likewise agreed, that Edward Roche should, from and after the 1st day of June instant, be elected, and is hereby elected, a general officer of the United Army of the County of Wexford.

"Signed by the above authority,

"NICHOLAS GRAY."



the town; while Major-General Johnson, aided by the extraordinary exertions of an inhabitant of Ross, named M'Cor-mick, who had served in the army, though not then in commission, brought back to the charge the troops that had fled across the river to the Kilkenny side. They presently recovered their post, and drove the insurgents from the town, the outskirts of which were now in flames, fired by the assailants or disaffected inhabitants, as Enniscorthy had been. The insurgents in their turn, rallied by their chiefs, returned with fury to the assault, and regained some ground. Again dislodged by the same exertions as before, and a third time rallied, they were at last finally repulsed, after an engagement of above *ten hours*, ending about two o'clock in the afternoon.

The official bulletin, published at Dublin on the 8th of June, stated that, on the 5th, about six in the morning, the insurgents attacked the position of General Johnson, at New Ross, with a very large force and great impetuosity; but that, after a contest of several hours, they were completely repulsed. The loss of the insurgents was very great, the streets being literally strewn with their carcasses. An iron gun upon a ship carriage had been taken; and late in the evening they retreated entirely to Carrickburn, leaving several iron ship guns not mounted.

General Johnson, in his despatch, greatly regretted the loss of that brave officer, Lord Mountjoy, who fell early in the contest. A return of the killed and wounded of His Majesty's forces had not then been received, but it appeared not to have been considerable. It was supposed to have been about three hundred, though the official detail afterwards made reduced it to about half that number.\*

Sir Jonah Barrington, on the authority of a Protestant gentleman, who was an eye-witness, gives in these words the horrible sequel of the affair of New Ross:—

“The firing, however, continued till

\* The impetuosity and ardour with which the insurgents assailed the town of Ross, and the prodigality with which they threw away their lives, surpassed belief. The troops did not stand it; and the difficulty with which General Johnson rallied them proves the terror which this charge of the insurgents had created. The first assailants had no sooner dislodged the troops, than, instead of pursuing them on their retreat, they fell to plunder, and became quickly disabled to act from intoxication, whereby they were so easily repulsed on the return of the fugitive troops. Sir Richard Musgrave says, [p. 410.] “that such was their enthusiasm that, though whole ranks of them were seen to fall, they were succeeded by others, who seemed to court the fate of their companions, by rushing on our troops with renovated ardour.”

towards night, when the insurgents who had not entered the houses, having no officers to command them, retreated through the gate by which they had entered, half-a-mile to Corbet Hill, leaving some thousands of their comrades asleep in different houses, or in the streets to which the flames had not communicated. Of these, the garrison put hundreds to the sword, without any resistance; and more than five thousand were either killed or consumed by the conflagration.”

We now come to a scene of savage vengeance, which, however provoked, it will be always painful for an Irishman to read of. The same night of the defeat and carnage in New Ross, the barn of Scullabogue at the foot of Carrickburn Hill, containing about one hundred loyalist prisoners, and guarded by a small party of insurgents, under John Murphy, of Loughgur, was deliberately fired, and all its inmates burned to death. The occasion of this proceeding was as follows: Some of the people retreating from New Ross, arrived in violent excitement, and announced that the troops and yeomanry were slaughtering the unresisting prisoners after the fighting was all over—which was true. Moreover, cases were notorious, as at Dunlavin and Carnew, where prisoners had been put to death with the most wanton cruelty, contrary to all the laws of civilized war; and men maddened by defeat are not likely to form a cool judgment as to the proper application and extent of the doctrine of retaliation in war. Yet there is, unhappily, no other way of enforcing upon an enemy due observance of the laws of war than the sternest retaliation for every outrage done by that enemy against those laws. All the historians of the insurrection\* represent that the people who burned the barn did it by way of retaliation. Sir Jonah Barrington says:—

“It is asserted that eighty-seven wounded peasants, whom the King's army had found, on taking the town, in the market house, used as an hospital, had been burned alive; and that, in retaliation, the insurgents burned above a hundred royalists in a barn at Scullabogue.”

Mr. Plowden, although, as a “loyal” Catholic, he thinks it his duty to give hard measure to the “rebels,” yet has conscientiously placed this affair of Scullabogue in its true light. He says:—

“There is no question but that the insurgents were universally and unexceptionably determined upon the principle of retaliation and retribution. They

\* Except Sir Richard Musgrave, whose authority not to be taken into consideration at all.



considered every man that lost his life under military execution, without trial, as a murdered victim, whose blood was to be revenged—so sanguinary and vindictive had this warfare fatally become. Besides numerous instances of such military executions, wherever the army had gained an advantage, they bore deeply in their minds the deliberate and brutal murder of thirty-eight prisoners, most of whom had not (at least who were said and believed not to have) committed any act of treason, at Dunlavin, on the 24th of May; and the like wanton and atrocious murder of thirty-nine prisoners of the like description at Carnew, on the morning of Whitsun Monday, merely because the party which had them in custody had orders to march; and they were unwilling to discharge them, but wanted time to examine, much more to try them. A gentleman of punctilious veracity and retentive memory has assured me that he was present in the House of Commons at the examination of a Mr. Frizell, a person of respectability, at the bar of that House, in the summer of 1798, who was a prisoner in the house of Scullabogue on the 4th of June. He was asked every question that could be suggested relative to the massacre; to which his answers were substantially as follows: That, having been taken prisoner by a party of the rebels, he was confined to a room on the ground floor in Scullabogue house, with twenty or thirty other persons; that a rebel guard with a pike stood near the window, with whom he conversed; that persons were frequently called out of the room, in which he was, by name, and he believes were soon after shot, as he heard the reports of muskets shortly after they had been so called out; that he understood that many were burned in the barn, the smoke of which he could discover from the window; that the sentinel pikeman assured him that they would not hurt a hair of his head, as he was always known to have behaved well to the poor; that he did not know of his own knowledge, but only from the reports current amongst the prisoners, what the particular cause was for which the rebels had set fire to the barn. Upon which, Mr. Ogle rose with precipitancy from his seat and put this question to him with great eagerness: ‘Sir, tell us what the cause was?’ It having been suggested that the question would be more regularly put from the chair, it was repeated to him in form; and Mr. Frizell answered that the only cause that he or, he believed, the other prisoners ever understood induced the rebels to this action,

was, that they had received intelligence that the military were again putting all the rebel prisoners to death in the town of Ross, as they had done at Dunlaven and Carnew. Mr. Ogle asked no more questions of Mr. Frizell, and he was soon after dismissed from the bar. To those gentlemen who were present at this examination, the truth of this statement is submitted.”

As to the number of victims, Dr. Madden, who has examined the subject carefully, sets it down at “about one hundred.”

General Bagenal Harvey was inexpressibly shocked by the affair of Scullabogue, especially when he learned that it was done upon a pretended order from himself.

When Cloney saw Harvey, after the flight from New Ross, he found the latter and several of the leaders “lamenting over the smoking ruins of the barn and the ashes of the hapless victims of that barbarous atrocity.”

Mr. George Taylor, whose views are those of the Ascendency party, states that Bagenal Harvey, the next morning, was in the greatest anguish of mind when he beheld Scullabogue barn: “He turned from the scene with horror, and wrung his hands and said to those about him: ‘Innocent people were burned there as ever were born. Your conquests for liberty are at an end.’ He said to a friend he fell in with, with respect to his own situation: ‘I see now the folly of embarking in this business with these people. If they succeed, I shall be murdered by them; if they are defeated, I shall be hanged.’” They were defeated, and he was hung.

The next day after the defeat, the insurgents resumed their position on Carrickburn Hill. There were loud murmurs against their unfortunate Commander-in-Chief; who, on his side, was not too well pleased with the conduct of his men. He, therefore, resigned, and retired to Wexford: but not before issuing “General Orders”—and it was his last act of military command—denouncing the penalty of death against “any person or persons who should take it upon himself or themselves to kill or murder any prisoner, burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the Commander-in-Chief.”

By election Father Phillip Roche was now made Commander-in-Chief. The insurgents next attacked some gunboats in the river, but without success. Father Roche then led them to the hill of Lacken, within two miles of Ross, the scene of



their late discomfiture. In the meantime, some important movements took place on the northern border of the county. Perhaps the most critical occasion during the whole insurrection was the advance of the insurgents upon Arklow, in Wicklow County, on the 9th of June, and the battle at that place. The commanders on this occasion were the two Fathers Murphy, John and Michael, and the force was the same which had so thoroughly defeated the King's troops at Tubberneering.

After the defeat of Walpole's army on the 4th of June, the insurgents had wasted much time in Carnew. At length, however, they collected their force at Gorey, and advanced to attack Arklow on the 9th, the first day in which that post had been prepared for defence. Their number exceeded twenty thousand, of whom near five thousand were armed with guns, the rest with pikes, and they were furnished with three serviceable pieces of artillery. The garrison consisted of sixteen hundred men, including yeomen, supplementary men, and those of the artillery. The insurgents attacked the town on all sides, except that which is washed by the river. The approach of that column, which advanced by the sea-shore, was rapid and impetuous; the picket-guard of yeomen cavalry, stationed in that quarter, instantly galloped off in such terror that most of them stopped not their flight till they had crossed the river, which was very broad, swimming their horses, in great peril of drowning. The further progress of the assailants was prevented by the charge of the regular cavalry, supported by the fire of the infantry, who had been formed for the defence of the town, in a line composed of three regiments, with their battalion artillery, those of the Armagh and Cavan militia, and the Durham Fencibles. The main effort of the insurgents, who commenced the attack near four o'clock in the evening, was directed against the station of the Durham, whose line extended through the field in front of the town to the road leading from Gorey.

As the insurgents poured their fire from the shelter of ditches, so that the opposite fire of the soldiery had no effect, Colonel Skerret, the second in command, ordered his men to stand with ordered arms, their left wing covered by a breast-work, and the right by a natural rising of the ground, until the enemy, leaving their cover, should advance to an open attack. This open attack was made three times in most formidable force, the assailants rushing within a few yards of the

cannons' mouths; but they were received with so close and effective a fire, that they were repulsed with loss in every attempt. The Durhams were not only exposed to the fire of the enemy's small arms, but were also galled by their cannon. General Needham, fearing to be overpowered by numbers, began to talk of a retreat; to which Colonel Skerret spiritedly replied to the General, that they could not hope for victory otherwise than by preserving their ranks; if they broke, all was lost. By this answer, the General was diverted some time from his scheme of a retreat, and in that time the business was decided by the retreat of the insurgents, who retired, when frustrated in their most furious assault, and dispirited by the death of Father Michael Murphy, who was killed by a cannon shot, within thirty yards of the Durham line, while he was leading his people to the attack.

Such is the generally-received account of the fight at Arklow. The loyalists have always claimed victory. Indeed, the official bulletin runs thus:—

“DUBLIN, June 10th, 1798.

“Accounts were received early this morning by Lieutenant-General Lake, from Major-General Needham, at Arklow, stating that the rebels had, in great force, attacked his position in Arklow at six o'clock yesterday evening. They advanced in an irregular manner, and extended themselves for the purpose of turning his left flank, his rear and right flanks being strongly defended by the town and barrack of Arklow. Upon their endeavouring to enter the lower end of the town, they were charged by the Fortieth Dragoon Guards, Fifth Dragoons, and Ancient Britons, and completely routed. All round the other points of the position they were defeated with much slaughter. The loss of His Majesty's troops was trifling, and their behaviour highly gallant.”

One part of this despatch is certainly false. The insurgents were not “routed,” but after remaining for some time in possession of the field of battle, they retired at their leisure, carrying off all their wounded. Sir Jonah Barrington calls it “a drawn battle;” and Miles Byrne, who fought in it, was under the impression that his party had gained a victory, though he admits they did not follow it up as they ought to have done. This fine old soldier, writing of it sixty years afterwards, in Paris, exclaims with bitter regret:—

“How melancholy to think a victory,



so dearly bought, should have been abandoned, and for which no good or plausible motive could ever be assigned. No doubt we had expended nearly all our ammunition, but that should have served as a sufficient reason to have brought all our pikemen instantly to pursue the enemy whilst in a state of disorder, and panic-struck, as it really was that day at Arklow.

"My firm belief is, to-day, as it was that day, that if we had had no artillery, the battle would have been won in half the time; for we should have attacked the position of the Durham Fencibles at the very onset, with some thousand determined pikemen, in place of leaving those valiant fellows inactive to admire the effect of each cannon-shot. No doubt our little artillery was admirably directed, and did wonders, until Esmond Kyan's wound deprived the Irish army of this gallant man's services; he was in every sense of the word a real soldier and true patriot.

"Never before had the English Government in Ireland been so near its total destruction. When Hoche's expedition appeared on the coast in 1796, the Irish nation was ready to avail itself of it, to throw off the English yoke; but now the people found they were adequate to accomplish this great act themselves without foreign aid. What a pity that there was not some enterprising chief at their head at Arklow, to have followed up our victory to the city of Dublin, where we should have mustered more than a hundred thousand in a few days; consequently, the capital would have been occupied without delay by our forces; when a provisional government would have been organized, and the whole Irish nation called on to proclaim its independence. Then would every emblem of the cruel English Government have disappeared from the soil of our beloved country, which would once more take its rank amongst the other independent states of the earth."

The town of Wexford was still in the hands of the insurgents. They had appointed a certain General Keogh Governor and Commandant of the town. This extraordinary man, having been a private in His Majesty's service, had risen to the rank of Lieutenant in the Sixth Regiment, in which he served in America. He was a man of engaging address, and of that competency of fortune which enabled him to live comfortably in Wexford. Proud and ambitious, he appreciated his own abilities highly; in clubs and coffee-houses he had long been in the habit of

censuring the corruptions of Government, and was so violent an advocate for reform that the Lord-Chancellor had deprived him of the Commission of the Peace, in the year 1796. In order to introduce some order into the town, the insurgents chose certain persons to distribute provisions, and for that purpose to give tickets to the inhabitants to entitle them to a rateable portion of them, according to the number of inhabitants in each house. Many habitations of the Protestants who had made their escape were plundered, some of them were demolished.

Several of the Protestant inhabitants of the town were imprisoned at this time, but only those who were considered as the most obnoxious, or were known as Orangemen, and, therefore, bound by oath to exterminate their Catholic neighbours. It must be admitted, that during the three weeks while the insurgents occupied Wexford, many military executions took place; but always on the plea of *retaliation*. For example, on the 6th of June, under an order from Enniscorthy, ten prisoners at Wexford were selected for execution, and suffered accordingly. Conjectures have been hazarded why such orders emanated from Enniscorthy rather than from Wexford. The natural inference from the limitation of the victims to half a score, is that the insurgents, who professed to act upon the principles of retaliation, had received information that a similar number of their people had suffered in like manner on the preceding day.

Mr. Plowden remarks very reasonably: "Bloody as the rebels are represented to have been, there could have been no other reason for their limiting their lust for murder to the particular number of ten."

Most of the sanguinary executions perpetrated at Wexford during this time are attributed to the violence of a man named Dixon, a ship captain belonging to the port. His atrocity is ascribed to private vengeance.

The Rev. Mr. Dixon, his relative, a Roman Catholic clergyman, having been sentenced to transportation, had been sent off to Duncannon Fort the day preceding the insurrection; he was found guilty on the testimony of one Francis Murphy, whose evidence was positively contradicted by three other witnesses. Under these circumstances, Dixon took a summary method of avenging himself; and was always ready to undertake the charge of doing military execution upon those who were abandoned to his ministrations. An author of candour and credit, the Rev. Mr. Gordon, has stated that he could not



ascertain with accuracy the number of persons put to death without law in Wexford during the whole time of its occupation by the insurgents; but believed it to have amounted to one hundred and one. Probably ten times that number of innocent country people had been during the same three weeks, murdered in cold blood by the yeomanry. It is sad to be obliged to go into such a dismal account; but as the "rebels" have been always very freely vilified for their cruelties, and have had but few friends to plead for them, it is right, at least to establish the truth, so far as that can be now discovered. Most of the sanguinary deeds were done without, or against, the orders of the leaders, who could not always restrain their exasperated followers; and the following proclamation, issued in Wexford, seems to show that there was no wish to spill the blood of any who had not been guilty of some peculiar atrocities towards the people:—

*"Proclamation of the People of the County of Wexford."*

"Whereas, it stands manifestly notorious that James Boyd, Hawtry White, Hunter Gowan, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob, late magistrates of this county, have committed the most horrid acts of cruelty, violence, and oppression, against our peaceable and well-affected countrymen. Now we, the people, associated and united for the purpose of procuring our just rights, and being determined to protect the persons and properties of those of all religious persuasions who have not oppressed us, and are willing with heart and hand to join our glorious cause, as well as to show our marked disapprobation and horror of the crimes of the above delinquents, do call on our countrymen at large to use every exertion in their power to apprehend the bodies of the aforesaid James Boyd, &c., &c., &c., and to secure and convey them to the jail of Wexford, to be brought before the tribunal of the people.

"Done at Wexford, this 9th day of June, 1798.

"GOD SAVE THE PEOPLE."

On the 2nd of June a small vessel was taken on the coast, and brought into Wexford; and on board this vessel Lord Kingsborough and three officers of the North Cork Militia were captured. During his lordship's detention he was lodged in the house of Captain Keogh, and to his humane, spirited, and indefatigable exertions, and those of Mr. Harvey, his lordship acknowledged that his life was

due, on the many occasions that the fury of the multitude broke out against him. There were few men in Ireland at this period more unpopular than his lordship—his exploits in the way of extorting confessions by scourgings, and other tortures, had rendered his name a terror to the people. The difficulty of preserving his life from the vengeance of a lawless multitude must have been great.

A considerable concentration of regular troops was now rapidly being formed in the county, with a view to crush the insurrection at once.

On the 19th of June, General Edward Roche, and such of the insurgents of his neighbourhood as were at Vinegar Hill, were sent home to collect the whole mass of the people for general defence. By the march of the royal army in all directions, towards Vinegar Hill and Wexford, a general flight of such of the inhabitants as could get off took place.

The alarm was now general throughout the country; all men were called to attend the camps; and Wexford became the universal rendezvous of the fugitives, who reported, with various circumstances of horror, the progress of the different armies approaching in every direction, marking their movements with terrible devastation. Ships of war were also seen off the coast; gunboats blocked up the entrance of the harbour; and from the commanding situation of the camp at the Three Rocks, on the mountain of Forth, the general conflagration, which was as progressive as the march of the troops, was clearly visible. On the approach of the army, great numbers of countrymen, with their wives and children, and any little baggage they could hastily pack up, fled towards Wexford as to an asylum, and described the plunder and destruction of houses, the murders and outrages of the soldiery let loose and encouraged to range over and devastate the country. General Moore, who advanced with a part of the army, did all in his power to prevent these atrocities, and had some of the murderers immediately put to death; but his humane and benevolent intentions were greatly baffled by the indomitable ferocity and revenge of the refugees returning home.

These cruelties being reported in the town of Wexford, provoked additional cruelties there also; and it was in this moment of alarm, when peremptory orders came for all the fighting men to repair to Vinegar Hill, that the savage Dixon, with the assistance of seventy or eighty men, whom he had made drunk for the purpose, perpetrated upon the



Protestant prisoners the slaughter called "Massacre of the Bridge of Wexford," in revenge for the slaughters which the Orangemen were committing upon unarmed people in the country around. When about thirty-five unfortunate men had been murdered, the butchery was stopped, at seven in the evening, by the interference of Father Corrin, and by the alarming intelligence that the post of Vinegar Hill was already almost beset by the King's troops.

After the indecisive affair at Arklow, the royal army, under General Needham, remained for some days close within its quarters; then proceeded to Gorey on the 19th of June, and thence towards Enniscorthy on the 20th, according to a concerted plan, conducted by Lieutenant-General Lake, that the great station of the insurgents at Vinegar Hill should be surrounded by His Majesty's forces, and attacked in all points at once. For this purpose, different armies moved at the same time from different quarters; one under Lieutenant-General Dundas; another under Major-Generals Sir James Duff and Loftus; that already mentioned from Arklow; and a fourth from Ross, under Major-Generals Johnson and Eustace, who were to make the attack on the town of Enniscorthy. The march of the army from Ross was a kind of surprise to the bands of Philip Roche, on Lacken Hill, who retired after a sharp fight, leaving their tents and a great quantity of plunder behind; separating into two bodies, one of which took its way to Wexford, the other to Vinegar Hill, where the Wexford insurgents were concentrating their forces. This eminence, with the town of Enniscorthy at its foot, and the country for many miles round, had been in possession of the insurgents from the 28th of May, during which time the face of affairs had been growing more and more gloomy for the cause of the people. With the despondency, there also came upon the insurgents a feeling of more vindictive rage. They saw the people could expect no mercy; and as the advancing columns spread devastation and slaughter, and the people on the hill could see the smoke of burning villages, and almost hear the shrieks of tortured and mangled women and children, they again applied their system of retaliation. The prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the insurgents, after a sham trial, or no trial at all, were shot or piked. About eighty-four suffered death here in this manner.\*

\* Hay's History. Plowden says that report carried the number of victims as high as four hundred.

It was at Vinegar Hill that the last engagement of any importance took place between the troops and the people. It was on the 21st of June, and little more than three weeks after Father John Murphy's rising.

Vinegar Hill is a gentle eminence on the banks of the river Slaney; at its foot lies the considerable town of Enniscorthy. At one point the ascent is rather steep, on the other, gradual; the top is crowned by a dilapidated stone building. The hill is extensive, and completely commands the town and most of the approaches to it; the country around it is rich, and sufficiently wooded, and studded with country-seats and lodges. Few spots in Ireland, under all its circumstances, can be more interesting to a traveller. On the summit of the hill the insurgents had collected the remains of their Wexford army; its number may be conjectured from General Lake deciding that twenty thousand regular troops were necessary for the attack; but, in fact, the effective of his army amounted, on the day of battle, to little more than thirteen thousand. The peasantry had dug a slight ditch around a large extent of the base; they had a very few pieces of small half-disabled cannon, some swivels, and not above two thousand fire-arms of all descriptions. But their situation was desperate; and General Lake considered that two thousand fire-arms, in the hands of infuriated and courageous men, supported by multitudes of pikemen, might be equal to ten times the number under other circumstances. A great many women mingled with their relatives, and fought with fury several were found dead among the men, who had fallen in crowds by the bursting of the shells.

General Lake, at the break of day, disposed his attack in four columns, whilst his cavalry were prepared to do execution on the fugitives. One of the columns (whether by accident or design is strongly debated) did not arrive in time at its station, by which the insurgents were enabled to retreat to Wexford, through a country where they could not be pursued by cavalry or cannon. It was astonishing with what fortitude the peasantry, uncovered, stood the tremendous fire opened upon the four sides of their position; a stream of shells and grape was poured on the multitude; the leaders encouraged them by exhortations, the women by their cries, and every shell that broke amongst them was followed by shouts of defiance. General Lake's horse was shot, many officers wounded, some killed, and a few gentle-



men became invisible during the heat of the battle. The troops advanced gradually, but steadily, up the hill; the peasantry kept up their fire, and maintained their ground; their cannon was nearly useless, their powder deficient, but they died fighting at their post. At length, enveloped in a torrent of fire, they broke, and sought their safety through the space that General Needham had left by the non-arrival of his column. They were partially charged by some cavalry, but with little execution; they retreated to Wexford, and that night occupied the town.

The insurgents left behind them a great quantity of plunder, together with all their cannon, amounting to thirteen in number, of which three were six-pounders. The loss on the side of the King's forces was very inconsiderable, though one officer, Lieutenant Sandys, of the Longford militia, was killed, and four others slightly wounded—Colonel King, of the Sligo regiment; Colonel Vesey, of the county of Dublin regiment; Lord Blaney, and Lieutenant-Colonel Cole.

Enniscorthy being thus recovered, after having been above three weeks in the hands of the insurgents, excesses, as must be expected in such a state of affairs, were committed by the soldiery, particularly by the Hessian troops, who made no distinction between loyalist and insurgent. The most diabolical act of this kind was the firing of a house, which had been used as an hospital by the insurgents, in which numbers of sick and wounded, who were unable to escape from the flames, were burned to ashes. \*

The town of Wexford was relieved on the same day with Enniscorthy, Brigadier General Moore, according to the plan formed by General Lake, having made a movement towards that quarter from the side of Ross, on the 19th, with a body of twelve hundred troops, furnished with artillery; and having directed his march to Taghmon, in his intended way to Enniscorthy, on the 20th, was, on his way thither, between one and two o'clock in the afternoon, attacked by a large force of the people from Wexford, perhaps five or six thousand, near a place called Goff's Bridge, not far from Hore Town. After an action, which continued till near eight, the insurgents were repulsed with some loss; yet the fate of the day was long doubtful, and many of the King's troops were killed.

Wexford, which had been taken by the

\* The Rev. Mr. Gordon says he was informed by a surgeon that the burning was accidental, the bed-clothes having been set on fire by the wadding of the soldiers' guns, who were shooting the patients in their beds.

insurgents on the 30th of May, was surrendered to the King's troops on the 23rd of June.

"Relying on the faith of Lord Kingsborough's promises of complete protection of persons and properties," we are told by Hay, "several remained in the town of Wexford, unconscious of any reason to apprehend danger; but they were soon taken up and committed to jail. The Rev. Philip Roach had such confidence in these assurances, and was so certain of obtaining similar terms for those under his command, that he left his force at Sledagh, in full hopes of being permitted to return in peace to their homes, and was on his way to Wexford unarmed, coming, as he thought, to receive a confirmation of the conditions, and so little apprehensive of danger that he advanced within the lines before he was recognised, when all possibility of escape was at an end. He was instantly dragged from his horse, and in the most ignominious manner taken up to the camp on the Windmill Hills, pulled by the hair, kicked, buffeted, and at length hauled down to the jail in such a condition as scarcely to be known. The people whom he left in expectation of being permitted to return quietly home, waited his arrival; but at last being informed of his fate, they abandoned all idea of peace, and set off, under the command of the Rev. John Murphy, to Fook's Mill, and so on through Scollaghgap into the County of Carlow. . . . .

"From the encampment at Ballenkeele, commanded by General Needham, detachments were sent out to scour the country. They burned the Catholic chapel of Belle-murrin, situate on the demesne of Ballenkeele, on which they were encamped, besides several houses in the neighbourhood."

It is not clear that Lord Kingsborough, who was in Wexford as a prisoner, had power to "promise protection of person and property," in case of surrender. At all events, no attention was paid to those negotiations. Two of the insurgent chiefs, Cloney and O'Hea, repaired to Enniscorthy, to make proposals for capitulation. . . . .

"Lieutenant-General Lake cannot attend to any terms by rebels in arms against their sovereign. While they continue so, he must use the force entrusted to him with the utmost energy for their destruction. To the deluded multitude he promises pardon on their *delivering into his hands their leaders*, surrendering their arms, and returning with sincerity to their allegiance.

"(Signed)

G. LAKE.

"ENNISCORTHY, June 22, 1798."



Lord Lake established his headquarters in the house of Captain Keogh, the late commandant of the post—Keogh being now lodged in jail. Cornelius Grogan surrendered, relying on the protection. Messrs. Colclough and Harvey attempted to escape, and concealed themselves in a cave upon the Great Saltee Island, off the coast. Here they were discovered; were brought to Wexford; and, a few days after, all these gentlemen, with many others, were tried by martial law and executed. Their heads were cut off and spiked in a row in front of the court-house.\*

As for the unfortunate country people, now left to the mercy of a savage soldiery, they were hunted down in all directions by the yeomanry cavalry. A detail of these horrors would be revolting. We must take a summary from the testimony of those who saw it.

"In short," says Mr. Edward Hay, "death and desolation were spread throughout the country, which was searched and hunted so severely that scarcely a man escaped. The old and harmless suffered, whilst they who had the use of their limbs, and were guilty, had previously made off with the main body of the people. The dead bodies scattered about, with their throats cut across, and mangled in the most shocking manner, exhibited scenes exceeding the usual horrors of war. The soldiery on this occasion, particularly the dragoons of General Ferdinand Hompesch, were permitted to indulge in such ferocity and brutal lust to the sex as must perpetuate hatred and horror of the army to generations."

The treatment of women by these Hessians and the yeomanry cowards was truly horrible; and the less capable of any

\* Bagenal Harvey was proved, on the trial, to have constantly opposed deeds of blood, and endeavoured to prevent the wanton destruction of loyalist property. It was so much the worse for him. The Rev. Mr. Gordon tells us a remarkable trait of the times: "The display of humanity by a rebel, was, in general, in the trials by court-martial, by no means regarded as a circumstance in favour of the accused. Strange as it may seem, in times of cool reflection, it was very frequently urged as a proof of guilt. Whoever could be proved to have saved a loyalist from assassination, his house from burning, or his property from plunder, was considered as having influence among the rebels—consequently a commander. This seems to have arisen from a rage of prosecution, by which the crime of rebellion was regarded as too great to admit any circumstances of extenuation in favour of the person guilty of it, and by which every mode of conviction against such a person was deemed justifiable."

He makes mention of the notoriety of this practice having drawn the following extraordinary exclamation from a Roman Catholic gentleman who had been one of the insurgents: "I thank my God that no person can prove me guilty of saving the life or property of any one!"

excuse, as, in this matter at least, there could be no pretence for retaliation.

"It is a singular fact," says Sir Jonah Barrington, "that in all the ferocity of the conflict, the storming of towns and of villages, *women* were uniformly respected by the insurgents. Though numerous ladies fell occasionally into their power, they never experienced any incivility or misconduct. But the foreign troops in our service (Hompesch's) not only brutally ill-treated, but occasionally *shot* gentlewomen. A very respectable married woman in Enniscorthy (Mrs. Stringer, the wife of an attorney), was wantonly shot at her own window by a German, in cold blood. The rebels (though her husband was a royalist) a short time after took some of those foreign soldiers prisoners, and piked them all, as they told them—'*just to teach them how to shoot ladies.*' Martial law always affects *both* sides. Retaliation becomes the law of nature wherever municipal laws are not in operation. It is a remedy that should never be resorted to but in *extremes.*"

On the same shocking subject Mr. Plowden observes:—

"As to this species of outrage, which rests now in proof, it is universally allowed to have been on the side of the military. It produced an indignant horror in the country which went beyond, but prevented retaliation. It is a characteristic mark of the Irish nation neither to forget nor forgive an insult or injury done to the honour of their female relatives. It has been boasted of by officers of rank that, within certain large districts, a woman had not been left undefiled; and upon observation, in answer, that the sex must then have been very complying, the reply was, that the bayonet removed all squeamishness. A lady of fashion, having in conversation been questioned as to this difference of conduct towards the sex in the military and the rebels, attributed it, *in disgust, to a want of gallantry in the crop-pies.* By these general remarks it is not meant to verify or justify the saying of a field-officer, or a lady of quality, both of whom could be named; but merely to show the prevalence of the general feelings and professions at that time upon these horrid subjects; and, consequently, what effects must naturally have flowed from them. In all matters of irritation and revenge, it is the conviction that the injury exists which produces the bad effect." Even Sir Richard Musgrave admits (p. 428) that, "on most occasions they did not offer any violence to the tender sex."

There was little more fighting in the



county. Separate bands of the insurgents were making their way either into Wicklow on the north, a country of mountains, glens, and lakes, or westward into Carlow by way of Scollaghgap, between Mount Leinster and Blackstairs Mountain.

The northern part of the county of Wexford had been almost totally deserted by all the male inhabitants on the 19th, at the approach of the army under General Needham. Some of the yeomanry, who had formerly deserted it, returned to Gorey on the 21st, and, on finding no officer of the army, as was expected, to command there, they, with many others, who returned along with them, scoured the country round, and killed great numbers in their houses, besides all the stragglers they met, most of whom were making the best of their way home unarmed from the insurgents, who were then believed to be totally discomfited. These transactions being made known to a body of the insurgents encamped at Peppard's Castle, on the 22nd, they resolved to retaliate, and directly marched for Gorey, whither they had otherwise no intention of proceeding. The yeomen and their associates, upon the near approach of the insurgents, fled back with precipitation; and thence, accompanied by many others, hastened toward Arklow, but were pursued as far as Coolgreney, with the loss of forty-seven men. The day was called Bloody Friday. The insurgents had been exasperated to this vengeance by discovering through the country as they came along, several dead men with their skulls split assunder, their bowels ripped open, and their throats cut across, besides some dead women and children. They even saw the dead bodies of two women, about which their surviving children were creeping and bewailing them! These sights hastened the insurgent force to Gorey, where their exasperation was considerably augmented by discovering the pigs in the streets devouring the bodies of nine men, who had been hanged the day before, with several others recently shot, and some still expiring.

After the return of the insurgents from the pursuit, several persons were found lurking in the town, and brought before Mr. Fitzgerald, particularly Mr. Peppard, sovereign of Gorey; but, from this gentleman's age and respectability, he was considered incapable of being accessory to the perpetration of the horrid cruelty which provoked and prompted this sudden revenge, and he and others were saved, protected, and set at liberty. At this critical time, the news of the burning of Mr. Fitzgerald's house, still further maddened the people; but, forgetful of

such great personal injury, he exerted his utmost endeavours to restrain the insurgents, who vociferated hourly for vengeance for their favourites, and succeeded in leading them off from Gorey; when, after a slight repast, they resumed their intended route, rested that night at the White Heaps, on Croghan Mountain, and on the 23rd set off for the mountains of Wicklow.

Such Wexford men as still remained in arms, having no longer any homes, and afraid to go to their homes if they had, were endeavouring to join the insurgents in other counties. One of these bodies, commanded by the Rev. John Murphy (with whom was Miles Byrne), proceeded through the County of Carlow; and, having arrived before the little town of Goresbridge, in the County of Kilkenny, a show of defence was made at a bridge on the River Barrow, by a party of Wexford Militia; but they were quickly repulsed, driven back into the village, and nearly all either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. The prisoners were conveyed with the insurgents until they arrived on a ridge of hills which divides the Counties of Carlow and Kilkenny from the Queen's County. Here they put some of the unfortunate prisoners to death, and buried their bodies on the hill. Others escaped and joined their friends. In justice to the memory of the Rev. John Murphy, it must here be stated that these murders were done contrary to his solemn injunctions, and that they were the result of long-felt and deadly hatred, entertained by some of the insurgents towards the militia-men. The example of murdering in cold blood was, no doubt, constantly set them by their enemies. If a war of partial extermination had not been proclaimed, no justification whatever could be offered for this atrocity; but it is well known that, although the practice was not avowedly sanctioned by the constituted authorities, it was in almost all cases unblushingly advised by the underlings of power in Ireland.

"Having rested for the night of the 23rd of June on the Ridge, as those hills are called, they proceeded early next morning to Castlecomer, and commenced a furious attack upon the town at ten o'clock. The principal resistance offered to their progress was from a party stationed in a house at the foot of the bridge, which was ably defended, and opposite to which many brave men fell, by rashly exposing themselves in front of so strong a position; for the town could have been attacked and carried with very little loss from another quarter. In fact,



every other position was speedily abandoned by the military and yeomanry, who retreated and took up a position on a hill at a respectful distance from the town. Here, as well as in most other places where the insurgents had been engaged, skill alone was wanting to insure success. The people had numbers and courage enough to overthrow any force which had been sent against them, if they had been skilfully commanded. The attack on the well-defended house was fruitlessly kept up for four hours, from which they finally retreated with severe loss, and marched in a northwest direction about five miles into the Queen's County.\* Soon after, finding themselves hard pressed by bodies of troops on three sides, they were obliged to retreat once more in the direction of the Carlow mountains. At Kilcomney they were forced to fight, but without any chance of success. They were entirely routed. Father Murphy was taken three days later, brought to General Duff's headquarters at Tullow, tried by martial law, and after being first cruelly scourged, was executed. His head, as usual, was spiked in the market place of the town.

Another of the scattered bands, led by Antony Perry, of Inch, and Father Kearns, penetrated into Kildare, and joining with the Kildare insurgents, attempted to march upon Athlone. They were beaten, however, at Clonard; Perry and Father Kearns were both taken prisoners, and met the usual doom.†

Edward Fitzgerald, Miles Byrne, and some other chiefs, still kept a considerable band on foot in the mountains on the border of Wicklow, from whence they occasionally made descents, and attacked some bodies of troops with success. One of these affairs was the assault upon the barracks at Hacketstown; and another was the memorable extirpation of that hated regiment, the "Ancient Britons," at Ballyellis. Before Miles Byrne finally retired into the fastnesses of Wicklow, to join Holt, he had the satisfaction to bear a hand in that bloody piece of work. We let him tell it in his own words:—

"Early in the morning of the 29th of June, it was resolved to march and attack the town of Carnew. The column was halted at Monaseed to repose and take some kind of refreshments, which were indeed difficult to be had, as every house had been plundered by the English troops on their way to Vinegar Hill a few days before.

"The Irish column resumed its march

\* Cloney's Memoir.

† Madden's Lives.

on the high road to Carnew, and in less than half an hour after its departure, a large division of English cavalry, sent from Gorey by General Needham, marched into Monaseed. This division consisted of the notorious Ancient Britons, a cavalry regiment which had committed all sorts of crimes when placed on free quarters with the unfortunate inhabitants previous to the rising. This infernal regiment was accompanied by all the yeomen cavalry corps from Arklow, Gorey, Coolgreeny, &c., and the chiefs of those corps, such as Hunter Gowan, Beaumont, of Hyde Park, Earl Mountnorris, Earl Courtown, Ram, Hawtry White, &c., could boast as well as the Ancient Britons of having committed cold-blooded murders on an unarmed country people. But they never had the courage to meet us on the field of battle, as will be seen by the dastardly way they abandoned the Ancient Britons at Ballyellis.

"The officers of the Ancient Britons, as well as those of the yeomen corps, learned that the Irish forces had just marched off on the road to Carnew, and were informed at a public-house that the insurgents who had been there were complaining how they were fatigued to death by the continual marching and counter-marching, and that although they had fire-arms, their ammunition was completely exhausted, and scarce a ball-cartridge remained in their army. The truth of this information could not be doubted. All the information coming through so sure a channel, encouraged the English troops to pursue without delay the insurgents, and to cut them down and exterminate them to the last man, for they could not resist without ammunition. The Ancient Britons were to charge on the road, whilst the yeomen cavalry, being so well mounted, were to cover the flanks and to march through the field; and those fox-hunters promised that not one croppy should escape their vengeance.

"All being thus settled, and plenty of whisky distributed to the English soldiers, the march to overtake the insurgents commenced, and when about two miles from Monaseed, at Ballyellis, one mile from Carnew, the Ancient Britons being in full gallop, charging, and as they thought, driving all before them, to their great surprise, were suddenly stopped by a barricade of cars thrown across the road, and at the same moment that the head of the column was thus stopped, the rear was attacked by a mass of pikemen, who sallied out from behind a wall, and completely shut up the road, as soon as the last of the cavalry had passed. The re-



mains or ruins of an old deer-park wall on the right-hand side of the road, ran along for about half-a-mile; in many parts it was not more than three or four feet high. All along the inside of this our gunmen and pikemen were placed. On the left-hand side of the road there was an immense ditch, with swampy ground, which few horses could be found to leap. In this advantageous situation for our men, the battle began; the gunmen, half covered, firing from behind the wall, whilst the English cavalry, though well mounted, could only make use of their carbines and pistols, for with their sabres they were unable to ward off the thrusts of our pikemen, who sallied out on them in the most determined manner.

"Thus, in less than an hour, this infamous regiment, which had been the horror of the country, was slain to the last man, as well as the few yeomen cavalry who had the courage to take part in the action. For all those who quit their horses and got into the fields were followed and piked on the marshy ground. The greater part of the numerous cavalry corps which accompanied the Ancient Britons kept on the rising ground, to the right side of the road, at some distance, during the battle, and as soon as the result of it was known, they fled in the most cowardly way in every direction, both dismayed and disappointed that they had no opportunity on this memorable day of murdering the stragglers, as was their custom on such occasions. I say 'memorable,' for during the war no action occurred which made so great a sensation in the country; as it proved to the enemy, that whenever our pikemen were well commanded and kept in close order, they were invulnerable. And, besides, it served to elate the courage and desire of our men to be led forthwith to new combats.

"The English troops that marched out from Carnew retreated back on the town in great haste, when they heard of the defeat of the Ancient Britons at Ballyellis. The infantry, finding that they were closely pursued by our men, barricaded themselves in a large malt house belonging to Bob Blaney. This malt house was spared at the time of the first attack on Carnew, when the greatest part of the town was burned, on account of the upright and humane conduct of the owner, Mr. Blaney. Now it had become a formidable and well fortified barrack, capable of holding out a long time, particularly as our army had no cannon to bring to bear against it. However, it was instantly attacked, and great efforts made

to dislodge the enemy, who kept up a continual fire from all the windows; and, as at Hacketstown, every means were taken to approach the doors under cover of beds, straw, &c., but without success, as the men were wounded through the beds and straw, before they could reach the doors. So it became necessary to wait till night came on, when the garrison which occupied this malt house would have no other alternative left it but to surrender at discretion, or be consumed to ashes.

"Edward Fitzgerald and the other chiefs deemed it more prudent, however, to raise the siege and to take a military position on Kilcavan Hill for the night, rather than remain before the barracks or malt house; knowing well that General Needham, who commanded the English forces at Gorey, as also the English troops at Ferns and Newtownbarry, would make a forced march to relieve Carnew, and, if possible, endeavour to obtain some kind of revenge for the destruction of their favourite Ancient Britons; whom they so cowardly abandoned at Ballyellis to their dismal and well-earned doom."

But these combats were now little more than efforts of despair. Fitzgerald, who commanded at Ballyellis, not long after surrendered, along with Aylmer, in Kildare, was detained for some time, then permitted to exile himself, and was known in 1803 to be residing at Hamburg. Mr. Fitzgerald was a gentleman of large property and great personal accomplishments, and had been goaded into resistance by the savage tyranny which he saw carried on around him. Miles Byrne, after these terrible scenes in his native land, afterwards served in the French army for thirty years. He died a Knight of St. Louis and an officer of the Legion of Honour, with the grade of *Chef-de-Batallion*.

It is to be remarked of this insurrection in Wexford, that scarcely any of its leaders were United Irishmen. Father Murphy, who began it, and some fifteen other clergymen who took an active part in it, not only were not United Irishmen, but had done their utmost to discourage and break up that society, in some cases even refusing the sacrament to those who were members. Therefore, that insurrection was not the result of a conspiracy to make an insurrection, but of the acts of the Government to provoke one.

Next, it is to be observed that this was not a "Popish" rebellion, although every effort was made to give it a sectarian character—first by disarming and disgracing the Catholic yeomanry, next by burning chapels and maltreating priests, and further by the direct incitements



and encouragement given to the Orange yeomanry (who were brought into the county for the purpose), to practise their favourite plan of exterminating Catholics. Yet some of the most trusted leaders of the people were Protestants; as Harvey, Grogan, one of the two Colcloughs, Antony Perry, and Keogh, Commandant of Wexford. There was, it is true, one Protestant church de-

faced, as we have seen, but not till long after several Catholic chapels had been demolished. It may be affirmed, that whatever there were of religious rancour in the contest was the work of the Government through its Orange allies, and with the express purpose of preventing an union of Irishmen of all creeds—a thing which is felt to be incompatible with British Government in Ireland.



## CHAPTER VIII.

1798.

Rising in Ulster—Antrim—Saintfield—Ballinahinch—Insurgents Defeated—McCracken and Monro Hanged—Skirmish in Cork County—Courts-Martial—Many Executions—Hanging of Father Redmond—Surrender of Fitzgerald and Aylmer—Compact between Prisoners and Government in order to Save the Lives of Byrne and Bond—Compact Violated by Government—Byrne Hanged—Bond Dies suddenly in Prison—Reign of Terror in Dublin—Brothers Sheares Tried—Hanged—Other State Trials—Curran in Court—"The Three Majors"—Sirr, Swan, and Sandys—The "Major's People"—John Claudius Beresford—Tortures in Dublin—Country in Wild Alarm—Spiked Heads—Fit Time to Propose Legislative Union—Marquis Cornwallis comes as Viceroy to bring about the Union—"Impression of Horror"—Apparent Measures to End the Devastations—Offers of "Protection"—Not Efficacious—Testimony of Lord Camden himself—True Account of the "Compact"—United Irishmen sent to Fort George.

THE rising of the United Irishmen of Ulster was delayed for two weeks after the day agreed upon (May 23d), by the arrest of some of their leaders. On the 7th of June, however, a meeting of magistrates having been appointed in the town of Antrim, for the prevention of rebellion, some insurgents, with design of seizing their persons, attacked the town at two o'clock in the afternoon, and soon overpowering the troops within it, very nearly gained possession. Major-General Nugent, who commanded in that district, having received intelligence of the intended rising, had ordered a body of troops to march to Antrim, who arrived after the rebels had taken possession of the town. They then attacked the insurgents in the town, but their vanguard, consisting of cavalry, being repulsed with the loss of twenty-three men killed and wounded, of which three were officers, Colonel Durham, who commanded the troops, brought the artillery to batter the town, which obliged the insurgents to abandon it, together with a six-pounder which they had brought with them, and two currie guns which they had taken from the King's army. They were pursued towards Shane's Castle and Randal's Town, with considerable slaughter; on this day Lord O'Neil was mortally wound-

ed.\* A small body made an unsuccessful assault on the town of Larne, and some feeble attempts were also made at Ballymena and Ballycastle. The main body of these northern insurgents retired to Donegar Hill, where, disgusted with their want of success and other circumstances, they agreed to surrender their arms, and almost all of them dispersed.

On the 8th of June another body of insurgents in the County Down, near Saintfield, under the command of a Dr. Jackson, set fire to the house of a man named Mackee, an informer against the United Irishmen. They placed themselves the next day in ambuscade, and nearly surrounded a body of troops under Colonel Stapleton, consisting of York Fencibles and yeomen cavalry, of whom they killed about sixty. The infantry, however, on whom the cavalry had been driven back in confusion, rallying with a coolness not very common in this war, succeeded in repulsing their assailants, but could not pursue, and eventually themselves retreated to Belfast. The loss of the insurgents was very small. The next day, under command of Henry Monro, a shopkeeper in Lisburn, they took possession of a strong post on Windmill Hill, above the little town of Ballinahinch, near the centre of the County Down, and at the house and in the demesne of Lord Moira. On the 12th, General Nugent, marching from Belfast, and Colonel Stewart from Downpatrick, formed with fifteen hundred men a junction near the Windmill Hill, of which they gained possession, together with the town, which before the action they wantonly set on fire. The action was maintained about three hours with artillery, with little or no execution. At length the Monaghan regiment of militia, posted with two field-pieces at Lord Moira's great gate, was attacked with such determined fury by the pikemen of the insurgents that it fell back in disorder. The

\* He had ridden into the town to attend the meeting of the magistrates, not knowing that the insurgents were in possession of it. He shot one who had seized the bridle of his horse, after which he was dragged from his saddle, and so wounded with pikes that he died in a few days.



want of discipline in the insurgents lost what their valour had gained. The disordered troops found means to rally, while the Argyleshire Fencibles, entering the demesne, were making their attack on another side. The insurgents, confused and distracted, retreated up the hill, and making a stand at the top, at a kind of fortification, defended the post for some time with great courage, but at length gave way and dispersed in all directions. Their loss exceeded a hundred; that of the royal army not above half that number. The main body of these insurgents retired to the mountains of Slieve Croob, where they soon surrendered or separated, returning to their several homes; and thus terminated this short and partial, but active insurrection in the north, in the course of which some slighter actions had taken place, particularly at Portaferry, where they were repulsed by the yeomanry. They also set fire to a revenue cruiser, in which forty men perished.

The official bulletin of the affair of Ballinahinch is as follows:—

“DUBLIN CASTLE, eleven o'clock A.M.,  
June 14, 1798.

“Intelligence is just arrived from Major-General Nugent, stating that, on the 11th instant, he had marched against a large body of rebels who were posted at Saintfield. They retired on his approach to a strong position on the Saintfield side of Ballinahinch, and there made a show of resistance, and endeavoured to turn his left flank; Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart arriving from Down with a pretty considerable force of infantry, cavalry, and yeomanry, they soon desisted, and retired to a very strong position behind Ballinahinch.

“General Nugent attacked them next morning at three o'clock, having occupied two hills on the left and right of the town, to prevent the rebels from having any other choice than the mountains in their rear for their retreat. He sent Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart to post himself, with part of the Argyle Fencibles and some yeomanry, as well as a detachment of the Twenty-second Light Dragoons, in a situation from whence he could enfilade the rebel line; whilst Colonel Leslie, with part of the Monaghan militia, some cavalry, and yeoman infantry, should make an attack upon their front. Having two howitzers and six six-pounders with the two detachments, the Major-General was enabled to annoy them very much from different parts of his position.

“The rebels attacked impetuously Colonel Leslie's detachment, and even jumped into the road from the Earl of Moira's demesne, to endeavour to take one of his guns; but they were repulsed with slaughter. Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart's detachment was attacked by them with the same activity, but he repulsed them also, and the fire from his howitzer and six-pounder soon obliged them to fly in all directions. Their force was, on the evening of the 12th, near five thousand; but, as many persons are pressed into their service, and almost entirely unarmed, the general does not suppose that on the morning of the engagement their numbers were so many.

“About four hundred rebels were killed in the attack and retreat, and the remainder were dispersed all over the country. Parts of the towns of Saintfield and Ballinahinch were burned. . . . Three or four green colours were taken, and six one-pounders, not mounted, but which the rebels fired very often, and a considerable quantity of ammunition.”

Of course, the failure in Ulster was attended by the usual penalty of failure. The leader of the Antrim insurgents was Henry Joy McCracken, a manufacturer of Belfast, a brave, well-educated, and highly estimable man in the prime of life. He and some others were tried and executed in Belfast. Monro was carried to Lisburn and hung at his own door, his wife and family being in the house.

An attempt at insurrection was next made in Cork County. The principal action, and the only one which Government has thought proper to communicate to the public, took place near the village of Ballynascarty, where, on the 19th of June, two hundred and twenty men of the Westmeath regiment of militia, with two six-pounders, under the command of their Lieutenant-Colonel, Sir Hugh O'Reilly, were attacked on their march from Clognakelty to Bandon, by a body of between three and four hundred men, mostly armed with pikes. The attack was made from a height on the left of the column so rapidly and fiercely that the troops had scarcely time to form. It seems plain, from Sir Hugh O'Reilly's dispatch, that at this moment there was imminent danger of his detachment being cut to pieces, when, fortunately for him, a hundred men of the “Caithness Legion,” under Major Innes, came up on the flank of the insurgents, and assailed them with so sharp and well-sustained a fire of musketry that O'Reilly had time to rally his men and get his guns into position. At last the people were forced to retire,



but were not pursued. Sir Hugh estimates their loss at one hundred and thirty. He does not tell his own. This action took place on the 19th of June.

There remained little to do now but to try and execute insurgent leaders by martial law. Courts-martial were instituted everywhere at the head-quarters of commanding officers. These terrible tribunals were in full action throughout Wexford County—in New Ross, Enniscorthy, Gorey, Newtownbarry, and Wexford town—and multitudes were hung or transported. Amongst the executions which caused the most horror was that of Father John Redmond, who had absolutely done nothing to favour the insurrection. "His body after death underwent the most indecent mutilations."

Those Wexford insurgents who remained with Mr. Fitzgerald, along with Mr. Aylmer, as outstanding chiefs, negotiated with General Dundas, to whom they surrendered on the 12th of July, on condition that all the other leaders who had adventured with them should be at liberty to retire whither they pleased out of the British dominions. The same terms were afterwards secured by General Moore to Mr. Garret Byrne, who was sent into confinement in the Castle of Dublin, together with Messrs. Fitzgerald and Aylmer, by which they fared much better than those who laid down their arms in Wexford, depending on the faithful fulfilment of the terms entered into with Lord Kingsborough.

The plan of proposing terms for saving the lives of Mr. Oliver Bond and Mr. Byrne was proposed through Mr. Dobbs, a member of Parliament. That gentleman went with the sheriff to the prison in which Mr. A. O'Connor was confined, on the 24th of July, with a paper† signed by seventy

state prisoners, purposing to give such information as was in their power, of the arms, ammunition, schemes of warfare, internal regulations and foreign negotiations of the United Irishmen, provided the lives of Messrs. Bond and Byrne should be spared.

In consequence of this agreement, some of the insurgent chiefs, who were still in arms, among whom was Mr. Aylmer, of Kildare, surrendered themselves.\* Several principals of the Union, particularly Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmet, Dr. MacNeven, and Samuel Neilson, gave details on oath in their examinations before the secret committees of the two Houses of Parliament, in whose reports, although garbled and falsified, published by authority of Government, is contained a mass of information concerning the conspiracy. Yet certain it is, that whatever were the original terms of the contract, and by whatever subsequent events the contractors were influenced or affected, the principal prisoners (fifteen in number) were not liberated, and a power was reserved or assumed by ministers to retain them in custody, at least during the continuance of the war with France. Oliver Bond died in the meantime in prison, "of apoplexy," as was given out; but the friends of this gentleman believe to the present hour that he was murdered at night by one of the jailers or turnkeys of Newgate prison—for what cause or at whose instigation was never known. The other prisoner, Byrne—to save whose life, along with that of Bond, the contract was expressly made—was hung.

During the whole time of the insurrection the city of Dublin was held under strict military law. A large force, consisting chiefly of yeomanry, was kept

posal. The state prisoners also hope that the benefit of this proposal may be extended to such persons in custody, or not in custody, as may choose to benefit by it."

Signed by seventy-three persons.

29th of July, 1798.

\* In a pamphlet, styled a *Letter from Arthur O'Connor to Lord Castlereagh*, dated from prison, January the 4th, 1799, that Minister is directly charged with a violation of the contract, and a misrepresentation to Parliament of the transactions between him and the prisoners of state. Other charges are made, one of which is, that the information given by these prisoners to Government was garbled, to serve the purposes of the ministry, and particularly that of a hundred pages, delivered by O'Connor himself, only one had been published in the reports of the secret committees. Since to this pamphlet, in which his lordship is peremptorily challenged to disprove any of the charges therein made, no reply has appeared, we have only the honour of his lordship for a disproof of these accusations, which *may be* a vindication to persons unacquainted with his lordship's character. The pamphlet was said to have been suppressed by Government, at least was not otherwise than clandestinely sold and circulated.

\* *Gordon's History.* Mr. Gordon knew Mr. Redmond well, and declared that during the insurrection he was mostly hiding in Protestant houses, to avoid the "rebels," who considered him an enemy to their cause.

† The following was the agreement signed by seventy-three on the 29th of July:—

"That the undersigned state prisoners, in the three prisons of Newgate, Kilmainham, and Bridewell, engage to give every information in their power of the whole of the internal transactions of the United Irishmen, and that each of the prisoners shall give detailed information of every transaction that has passed between the United Irishmen and foreign states; but that the prisoners are not, by naming or describing, to implicate any person whatever, and that they are ready to emigrate to such country as shall be agreed on between them and Government, and give security not to return to this country without the permission of Government, and give security not to pass into an enemy's country, if on their so doing they are to be freed from prosecution, and also Mr. Oliver Bond be permitted to take the benefit of this pro-



constantly in the metropolis. The grand and royal canals, which were fifty feet broad and twelve deep, were a security against a surprise; and the several bridges were strongly palisaded, and guarded both by night and by day. The trials and executions of some of the principal leaders in the rebellion tended to keep others in awe, and prevented any further attempts of individuals. Among others, an insurgent officer, a Protestant, named Bacon, having been apprehended disguised in female apparel, was executed on the 2d of June, near Carlisle bridge. On the 14th was executed, on the same scaffolding, Lieutenant Esmond. On the 12th of July, Henry and John Sheares were brought to trial, condemned, and soon after put to death. The trial of John M'Cann, who had been Secretary of the Provincial Committee of Leinster, followed on the 17th; that of Michael William Byrne, delegate from the County Committee of Wicklow, and that of Oliver Bond, on the 23d. Mr. Curran was the leading counsel on all these trials; and it was a service of danger. The Court was usually crowded with armed men; and as the undaunted advocate delivered his powerful and indignant pleadings, often at midnight, amidst a hostile and menacing audience, the lamplight glittered upon serried bayonets, and he was sometimes interrupted by a clash of arms. "What is that?" he sternly exclaimed, on the trial of Oliver Bond. "The question was occasioned by a clash of arms among the military that thronged the Court. Some of those who were nearest to the advocate appeared, from their looks and gestures, about to offer him personal violence; upon which, fixing his eye sternly upon them, he exclaimed: 'You may assassinate, but you shall not intimidate me.'"<sup>\*</sup>

While the insurrection was raging in Wexford, and capital convictions and executions were very frequent all over the country, it must be supposed that the people of Dublin were in a state of profound alarm, sometimes real and genuine terror, sometimes a factitious alarm, created by the agents of Government to furnish excuse for brutal acts of severity. Then was the reign of the "three Majors," Sirr, Swan, and Sandys. These men had been officers of the militia; and all in a sufficiently decent rank of life—the last-named, indeed, was brother-in-law to Mr. Under-Secretary Cooke. This triumvirate were now really the rulers of Dublin, and the most indispensable of all the agencies of the Castle. Their services chiefly consisted in organizing and main-

taining a band of wretches, who were employed at the assizes throughout the country, but especially in the vicinity of Dublin, as informers. They were known to the people by the name of the "Battalion of Testimony."

It is said, on high authority, that the employment of spies and informers tends rather to the increase than the suppression of crime, and that a good government has no need of their infamous services. One thing is certain, that their services were thought useful to a bad government; and the same circumstance that rendered their services necessary made their infamy a matter of little moment to their employers. From the year 1796 to 1800, a set of miscreants, steeped in crime, sunk in debauchery, prone to violence, and reckless of character, constituted what was called the "Major's People." A number of these people were domiciled within the gates of the Castle, where there were regular places of entertainment allotted for them contiguous to the Viceroy's palace; for another company of them a house was allotted opposite Kilmainham jail, familiarly known to the people by the name of the "Stag House;" and for one batch of them, who could not be trusted with liberty, there was one of the yards of that prison, with the surrounding cells, assigned to them, which is still called the "Stag Yard." These persons were considered under the immediate protection of Majors Sirr, Swan, and Sandys, and to interfere with them in the course of their duties as spies or witnesses was to incur the vengeance of their redoubtable patrons.

Sandys had been a captain in the Longford militia. Shortly after his marriage with the sister of the Under-Secretary's wife, he was appointed Brigade-Major to the garrison of Dublin. In 1797, '98, and '99 he presided over the Prevot Prison, in the Royal Barracks—a filthy, close, dark, and pestilential place of confinement, with a small court-yard, and some ill-constructed sheds, set up to afford increased accommodation for the multitude of persons daily sent to the depot.

Major Sandys carried on a regular trade in the official advantages of his functions in the Prevot. He sold indulgences to the state prisoners, of a little more than the ordinary scant allowances of air, light, and food. He sold exemption from the taws and triangles for money and for goods, for every marketable commodity.

The court-yard of that miserable den was ringing for ever, by day and by night, with the shrieks of wretches scourged at

<sup>\*</sup> *Life of Curran.* By his Son.



the Major's triangles, to extort confessions, or to force the prisoners to make statements inculcating others. The court in the rear of the Royal Exchange was another place of torture; but perhaps the most dreadful scene of continual lacerations, pitch-cappings, and picketings, in Dublin, was in the Riding-School in Marlborough Street, where the punishments were administered under the eye and by the direction of Mr. John Claudius Beresford, a scion of the great house of Waterford.\* Yet, in a debate in the English House of Commons in March, 1801, on the Irish Martial Law Bill, in reply to an observation with respect to the use of torture, made by Mr. Taylor, Lord Castlereagh had certainly the boldness to affirm that "torture never was inflicted in Ireland with the knowledge, authority, or approbation of Government." Mr. John Claudius Beresford, who was the most competent of all men to speak on that subject, observed that "it was unmanly to deny torture, as it was notoriously practised;" and in a subsequent debate in the House of Lords, on another occasion, in the Imperial Parliament, Lord Clare avowed the practice, and defended it on the grounds of its necessity.

No specific orders, undoubtedly, emanated from the Government to Mr. Beresford to convert the Riding-School into a scourging-hall—to Mr. Hepenstal to make a walking gallows of his person—to Mr. Love for the half-hanging of suspected rebels at Kilkea Castle—to Mr. Hunter Gowan for burning down the cabins of the croppies—to the High Sheriff of Tipperary for the laceration of the peasant's back, of which Sir John Moore was an eye-witness—to Captain Swaine for the picketings at Prosperous, or Sir Richard Musgrave for writing a treatise in defence of torture; or to all the other gentlemen of "discernment and fortitude" for adopting "the new expedient" for discovery of crime.

"But," observes Dr. Madden, "it is in vain, utterly futile, and fruitless, to deny the constant use of torture in 1797 and 1798, in the Riding-House, Marlborough Street, under the direction of John Claudius Beresford, and in the Prevot Prison in the Royal Barracks, then governed by Major Sandys, brother-in-law to Mr. Under-Secretary Cooke (Lord Castlereagh's chief official in the Secretary's office); occasionally, too, in the Royal Exchange, and in the small vacant space adjoining the entrance to the Upper Castle Yard,

immediately behind the offices of Lord Castlereagh, and having on the opposite side the back part of the Exchange, where, under the very windows of Lord Castlereagh's office, the triangles were set up for fastening the wretches to, who were flogged—tortured even to death."

There was at that time a military order enforced in Dublin, that every householder should expose a list on his front door of all the inmates of his house; but this observance being complied with by no means insured families against domiciliary visits from the military, or from the "Major's People," whenever there was any suspicion that obnoxious persons or papers might be secreted there. There are still alive many who recollect the terror and agony of households when invaded by these odious wretches, who did not generally confine themselves to their ostensible errand, but insulted women and girls, and carried off valuable plate. One instance of this is mentioned in a speech of Curran, where a silver cup was taken possession of because it had engraved upon it the words *Erin go bragh!* The accounts of pay and weekly "subsistence money" given to the "Major's People," as well as to other common swearers, are extant, and may be read in the collections of Dr. Madden. When it is remembered that scenes similar to these were passing in every town, as well as Dublin; that many bridges and "gallows-hills" showed their blackening corpses swinging in the winds; that in front of many court-houses, and over the gateways of many jails, ghastly heads were grinning upon spikes,\* while every hour gave birth to some new and fearful rumour of horrors yet unknown, some idea may be formed of the terror in Ireland.

The country was now, therefore, precisely in the frame of mind which Mr. Pitt considered favourable for facilitating his favourite measure, a Legislative Union. Divided into two bitterly hostile parties, vindictive rage on the one side, affright and despondency on the other—the United Irish Society ruined, partly by the savage extirpation of Catholic insurgents, partly

\* On the trial of John Magee for libel, in 1813, O'Connell, in his memorable speech on that occasion, thus alludes to Toler (Lord Norbury), when employed on special commissions: "Why, in one circuit, during the administration of the cold-hearted and cruel Camden, there were one hundred individuals tried before one judge; of these ninety-eight were *capitally convicted*, and *ninety-seven hanged!* One escaped, but he was a soldier, who murdered a peasant—a thing of a trivial nature. *Ninety-seven victims in one circuit!!*"

Toler was Solicitor-General in 1798, but was sometimes put on the Commission, and went circuit.

\* Dr. Madden has gone to the trouble of collecting a great many of the authentic cases of half-hangings, scourgings, and other tortures inflicted in those days.



by the defection of the Republican Presbyterians of the north, and the mutual distrust which had been carefully sown between these two sections of that organization—all hope of either Catholic emancipation or Reform (through an *Irish Parliament*) being now apparently adjourned to an indefinite futurity, it was believed that the parties would at last be led to throw themselves into the arms of England, who would know how to take care of them all. Accordingly Lord Camden, having done his office in stirring up rebellion, was recalled; and the Marquis Cornwallis, already unfavourably known in two worlds, arrived in Ireland on the 20th day of June—the very day before the battle of Vinegar Hill—to assume the reins of government, but invested, besides the vice-regal power, with the additional authority of Commander of the forces. It appeared that the instructions of this nobleman were to moderate, by degrees, the horrible rage of extermination. The estimates given of his character and conduct by contemporary Irish writers are wonderfully various. Sir Jonah Barrington says of him: “Lord Cornwallis was now selected to complete the project of a Union, and Lord Castlereagh was continued as Chief Secretary. His system was of all others the most artful and insidious; he affected impartiality while he was deceiving both parties; he encouraged the United Irishman, and he roused the Royalist; one day he destroyed, the next day he was merciful. His system, however, had not exactly the anticipated effect. Everything gave reason to expect a restoration of tranquillity; but it was through the impression of *horror* alone that a union could be effected; and he had no time to lose, lest the country might recover its reason.”

Mr. Plowden, on the other hand, who was devoted to the measure of a union, and was himself already writing pamphlets in its favour, can find no terms strong enough in lauding Lord Cornwallis. He says: “This appointment, in this critical juncture, appears, under Providence, to have been the immediate salvation of Ireland, not only by putting an immediate check upon the uncontrolled ferociousness of the soldiery, by stopping military executions, suspending the sentences of courts-martial till he had himself revised the minutes, by converting the system of coercion and terrorism into that of conciliation, by gaining the affections of the people, by drawing upon himself the hatred of the Orangemen, *by bringing to bear the incorporate union with Great Britain*, as the efficient means of redressing popular grievances, and crushing the seeds of

perpetual feuds and acrimony kept up chiefly by the subsistence of Orangeism.”

Lord Cornwallis certainly did, not long after his arrival, begin to interpose a check upon the bloody work then going on in Wexford. On the 28th of June, after the heads of the Wexford leaders had been duly spiked in front of the jail, and the yeomanry cavalry had glutted themselves for one whole week with carnage and conflagration, picketings, and scourgings, Lord Lake was removed from command in that quarter, and it was given to General Hunter, with directions to put an end to the indiscriminate slaughter. A proclamation was issued and printed in the *Dublin Gazette*, but not till the 3d of July (thus giving the Orangemen one other week's bloody carnival), authorizing His Majesty's generals to give *protections* on certain terms. The proclamation is in these words:—

“Whereas, it is in the power of His Majesty's generals, and of the forces under their command, entirely to destroy all those who have risen in rebellion against their sovereign and his laws; yet it is nevertheless the wish of Government that those persons who, by traitorous machinations, have been seduced, or by acts of intimidation have been forced, from their allegiance, should be received into His Majesty's peace and pardon, — commanding in the county of — specially authorized thereto, does hereby invite all persons who may be now assembled in any part of the said county against His Majesty's peace, to surrender themselves and their arms, and to desert the leaders who have seduced them; and for the acceptance of such surrender and submission the space of fourteen days from the date hereof is allowed, and the towns of — are hereby specified, at each of which places one of His Majesty's officers and a Justice of the Peace will attend; and upon entering their names, acknowledging their guilt, and promising good behaviour for the future, and taking the oath of allegiance, and, at the same time, abjuring all other engagements contrary thereto, they will receive a certificate which will entitle them to protection so long as they demean themselves as becomes good subjects.

“And, in order to render such acts of submission easy and secure, it is the General's pleasure that persons who are now with any portion of the rebels in arms, and willing to surrender themselves, do send to him, or to — any number from each body of rebels not exceeding ten, with whom the General or — will settle the manner in which they may



repair to the above towns, so that no alarm may be excited, and no injury to their persons be offered.

“June 29, 1798.”

Then follows the form of certificate of “protection.” Next, on the 17th of July, a message from the Viceroy was read in the House of Commons, signifying the king’s pleasure that an “Amnesty Act” should be passed, with certain conditions and large exceptions. Accordingly such a bill was passed in favour of all rebels who had not been leaders; who had not committed manslaughter, except in the heat of battle, and who should comply with the conditions mentioned in the proclamation. But practically there was no cessation, at least in the unhappy County of Wexford, of the horrors of military outrage, even after the proclamation. General Hunter, indeed, seems to have endeavoured to appease the minds of the people, and restore confidence and tranquillity to that distracted county.

But some principal gentlemen of the county, and others besides, attempted to interpose their authority to supersede the tenor of the general pardon held out by proclamation, pursuing the same line of arbitrary conduct which they had practiced previous to the insurrection. They even proceeded to the length of presuming to tear some of the protections which the country people had obtained; but this coming to the General’s knowledge, he quieted them by threatening to have them tied to a cart’s tail and whipped. Others had been rash enough to levy arbitrary contributions for the losses they had sustained during the insurrection. A curate was induced to wait on the General, with an account of an intended “massacre” of the Protestants, which he detailed with the appearance of the utmost alarm, and was patiently heard out by the General, who then addressed him with this marked appellation and strong language:—“*Mr. Massacre*, if you do not prove to me the circumstances you have related, I shall get you punished in the most exemplary manner for raising false alarms, which have already proved so destructive to this unfortunate country.” The curate’s alarm instantly changed its direction and became personal; and on allowing that his fears had been excited by vague report to make this representation, his piteous supplication, and apparent contrition, procured him forgiveness.

The various outrages that were committed in the country prevented numbers from coming into the quarters of the several commanding officers to obtain

protections, as many of the yeomen and their supplementaries continued the system of conflagration, and shooting such of the peasantry as they met; and this necessarily deterred many from exposing themselves to their view, and prevented, of course, the humane and moderate intentions of the present Government from having their due effect. The melancholy consequence of such a system of terror, persecution, and alarm had very nearly brought on the extermination of an extensive and populous tract of the County of Wicklow, called the Macomores. The perpetration of the plan was providentially prevented by the timely and happy intervention of Brigade-Major Fitzgerald, under the directions and orders of General Hunter. Incessant applications and remonstrances had been made by different magistrates in Gorey and its vicinity, to Government, complaining that this range of country was infested with constant meetings of rebels, who committed every species of outrage, and these reports were confirmed by affidavits. They were credited by Government, to whom they were handed in by a magistracy presumed to be deliberate, grave, and respectable. The Viceroy was rendered indignant at these reiterated complaints, and orders were sent to the different generals and other commanding officers, contiguous to the devoted tract, to form a line along its extent on the western border, and at both ends, north and south, on the land side, so as to leave no resource to the wretched inhabitants, *who were to be slaughtered by the soldiery, or to be driven into the sea*, as it is bounded by the channel on the eastward. Even *women and children were to be included* in this terrific example. The execution of this severe exemplary measure was intrusted to the discretion of General Hunter, who fortunately discovered the inhuman misrepresentation that had produced those terrific orders. The devoted victims found an opportunity to implore protection from the incursions of the black mob (they thus denominated the supplementaries to the different corps of yeomanry), who wreaked their vengeance even upon those who had received protection from General Needham, at Gorey, as different parties of the soldiery and yeomanry waited their return in ambush, and slaughtered every one they could overtake.

This prevented many from coming in for protection. Afterwards these sanguinary banditti made incursions into the country, fired into the houses, thus killing and wounding many unoffending peasants. Several houses after being plundered were



burned, and the booty was brought into Gorey. By the frequency of these horrible excesses and depredations, such houses as remained unburned were of course crowded with several families, and this multiplied the number of victims at each succeeding incursion. At last most of the inhabitants took refuge on the hills, and armed themselves with every offensive weapon they could procure.

The false alarmists were not depressed by several discomfitures; for although General Hunter reported the country to be in a perfect state of tranquillity, they again returned to the charge, and renewed their misrepresentations. Mr. Hawtry White, Captain of the Ballaghkeen Cavalry, and a Justice of the Peace for the county, sent several informations to Government of the alarming state of the country; and the commanding officer at Gorey was so far persuaded of the intention of a general rising, that he quitted the town and encamped on a hill above it. These representations, made under the semblance of loyalty, had not, however, the wished-for weight with the Government. General Hunter was ordered to inquire into the information of Mr. Hawtry White. Major Fitzgerald was again sent out, and the result of his inquiry was that the information was unfounded. Upon this the General ordered Mr. Hawtry White to be brought to Wexford, and he was accordingly conducted thither and put under arrest; and on his still persisting in his false representations, he was conducted to the island where he asserted the rebels were encamped, and, lo! no island appeared above the water. Mr. Hawtry White was conducted back to Wexford, and General Hunter determined to bring him to a court-martial. Many gentlemen and ladies, however, interfered in the most earnest manner to prevent this investigation, representing that Mr. White's great age might have subjected him to the imposition of fabricated information; and the firmness of the General relaxed at the instance of so many respectable persons.

To show how very far the people of the country were really protected by the proclamations and protections announced by Lord Cornwallis, it will be needful only to give one or two extracts from the *Memoirs and Correspondence* of that nobleman, published many years later.

[*Extract of a letter of Lord Cornwallis to the Duke of Portland, dated the 8th of July, 1798.*]

“The Irish militia are totally without

discipline, contemptible before the enemy when any serious resistance is made to them, but ferocious and cruel in the extreme when any poor wretches, either with or without arms, come within their power; in short, murder appears to be their favourite pastime.” (Vol. ii., p. 357.)

[*Extract from a letter of Marquis Cornwallis to Major-General Ross.*]

“DUBLIN CASTLE, July 24, 1798.

“Except in the instances of the six state trials that are going on here, there is no law either in town or country but martial law, and you know enough of that to see all the horrors of it, even in the best administration of it. Judge, then, how it must be conducted by Irishmen, heated with passion and revenge. But all this is trifling compared to the numberless murders that are hourly committed by our people without any process or examination whatever. The yeomanry are in the style of the loyalists in America, only much more numerous and powerful, and a thousand times more ferocious. These men have saved the country; but they now take the lead in rapine and murder. The Irish militia, with few officers, and those chiefly of the worst kind, follow closely on the heels of the yeomanry in murder and every kind of atrocity, and the fencibles take a share, although much behind-hand, with the others. The feeble outrages, burnings, and murders which are still committed by the rebels serve to keep up the sanguinary disposition on our side; and as long as they furnish a pretext for our parties going in quest of them, I see no prospect of amendment.

“The conversation of the principal persons of the country all tends to encourage this system of blood; and the conversation, even at my table, where you will suppose I do all I can to prevent it, always turns on hanging, shooting, burning, &c.; and if a priest has been put to death, the greatest joy is expressed by the whole company. So much for Ireland and my wretched situation.” (Vol. ii., p. 368.)

The Marquis Cornwallis issued the following “General Orders,” with the view of restraining the murderous and rapacious conduct of the troops in Ireland, dated August 31, 1798:—

“It is with great concern that Lord Cornwallis finds himself obliged to call on the general officers and the commanding officers of regiments in particular, and in general on officers of the army, to assist him in putting a stop to the licentious conduct of the troops, and in saving the



wretched inhabitants from being robbed, and in the most shocking manner ill-treated, by those to whom they had a right to look for safety and protection.

"Lord Cornwallis declares that if he finds that the soldiers of any regiment have had opportunities of committing those excesses from the negligence of their officers, he will make those officers answerable for their conduct; and that if any soldiers are caught either in the act of robbery, or with the articles of plunder in their possession, they shall be instantly tried, and immediate execution shall follow their conviction."

The editor of the *Cornwallis Memoirs* informs us (p. 13, vol. iii.) that between the landing of the French, in the autumn of 1798, and the month of February, 1799 (a period of four months), although there were three hundred and eighty persons tried by court-martial, one hundred and thirty-one capitally convicted, and ninety executed, yet the number of the latter fell short of what "the loyal party expected and desired;" and he adds, "Many persons in England, as well as in Ireland, who were considered mild and temperate in their views, severely censured what they termed a ruinous system of lenity; nor was the British Government free from a participation in such feelings."

At p. 90, vol. iii., we find the following observations:—

"To Dr. Duigenan's letter Lord Castle-reagh replied, on the 6th of March, 1799, that, exclusive of all persons tried at the assizes, Lord Cornwallis had decided personally upon four hundred cases; that out of one hundred and thirty-one condemned to death, eighty-one had been executed; and that four hundred and eighteen persons had been transported or banished, in pursuance of the sentences of courts-martial, since Lord Cornwallis had arrived in Ireland."

[*Extract from a letter of Marquis Cornwallis to Major-General Ross, April 15, 1799.*]

"You write as if you really believed that there was any foundation for all the lies and nonsensical clamour about my lenity. On my arrival in this country I put a stop to the burning of houses and murder of the inhabitants by the yeomen, or any other persons who delighted in that amusement; to the flogging for the purpose of extorting confession; and to the free-quarters, which comprehend universal rape and robbery throughout the whole country." (Vol. iii., p. 89.)

We have seen that the clamour about Lord Cornwallis's clemency was in reality

"nonsensical," as he declares; and that he is not even to be credited with the amount of lenity to which he himself lays claim. In fact, it is altogether impossible to believe that, with the immense military force then in Ireland, and of which he was absolute Commander-in-chief, he could not (if he would) have put a stop to the murders and depredations upon the now defenceless people. The only admissible theory of his conduct is, that he had instructions to keep alive what Barrington calls the "impression of horror," until the Union should be effectuated.

All this time there was nothing changed in the state of things in Dublin itself. The three majors and their "people" still predominated with absolute sway, and the state trials were proceeding, before carefully packed juries, of course. It was under this lenient and conciliatory Cornwallis that some of the best and worthiest gentlemen of Ireland were hunted to death by the basest of mankind, with the prostituted forms of law, before judges predetermined to convict, and juries of Orangemen specially brought together by perjured sheriffs, not to try, but simply to hang. The two brothers Sheares were hung and beheaded in front of Newgate prison on the 22d of July (a month after the accession of Cornwallis to the viceroyalty). Byrne and Bond were both convicted and sentenced to death. It was at this moment that the "compact" already mentioned was entered into by certain of the state prisoners with the Government, with a view of stopping, if possible, the further effusion of blood, and specifically and expressly of saving the lives of Byrne and Oliver Bond. As the Government not only violated that compact, but made it the occasion of slandering men to whom all was lost except their honour, it is necessary, in justice to those best and purest of Irish patriots, to record the actual facts. They are to be found in the collections of the laborious Dr. Madden.

The account of the compact of the state prisoners with the Irish Government, taken from the original draft of that document in the handwriting of Thomas Addis Emmet, John Sweetman, and William James MacNeven, was drawn up by them in France, on their liberation from Fort George, and remained in the possession of John Sweetman. The following part of the Statement is in the handwriting of Thomas A. Emmet:—

"We, the undersigned, until this day state prisoners and in close custody, feel that the first purpose to which we should apply our liberty is to give to the world a



short account of a transaction which has been grossly misrepresented and falsified, but respecting which we have been compelled to silence for nearly the last three years. The transaction alluded to is the agreement entered into by us and other state prisoners with the Irish Government, at the close of the month of July, 1798; and we take this step without hesitation, because it can in nowise injure any of our friends and former fellow-prisoners, we being among the last victims of perfidy and breach of faith.

“From the event of the battles of Antrim and Ballinahinch, early in June, it was manifest that the northern insurrection had failed in consolidating itself. The severe battle of Vinegar Hill, on the 21st of the same month, led to its termination in Leinster; and the capitulation of Ovidstown, on the 12th of July,\* may be understood as the last public appearance in the field of any body capable of serving as a rallying point. In short, the insurrection, for every useful purpose that could be expected from it, *was at an end*; but blood still continued to flow—courts-martial, special commissions, and, above all, sanguinary Orangemen, now rendered doubly malevolent and revengeful from their recent terror, desolated the country, and devoted to death the most virtuous of our countrymen. These were lost to liberty, while she was gaining nothing by the sacrifice.

“Such was the situation of affairs when the idea of entering into a compact with Government was conceived by one of the undersigned, and communicated to the rest of us conjointly with the other prisoners confined in the Dublin prisons, by the terms of which compact it was intended that as much might be saved and as little given up as possible. It was the more urgently pressed upon our minds, and the more quickly matured, by the impending fate of two worthy men. Accordingly, on the 24th of July, the state prisoners began a negotiation with Government, and an agreement was finally concluded, by the persons named by their fellow-prisoners, at the Castle of Dublin, and was finally ratified by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Cooke, three of the King’s ministers. In no part of this paper were details or perfect accuracy deemed necessary, because the ministers, and particularly Lord Castlereagh, frequently and solemnly declared that it

should in every part be construed by Government with the utmost liberality and good faith; and particularly the last clause was worded in this loose manner to comply with the express desire of the ministers, who insisted upon retaining to Government the entire popularity of the measure; but it was clearly and expressly understood, and positively engaged, that every leading man not guilty of deliberate murder should be included in the agreement who should choose to avail himself of it, in as full and ample a manner as the contracting parties themselves, and that there should be a general amnesty, with the same exceptions, for the body of the people.

“We entered into this agreement the more readily, because it appeared to us that by it the public cause lost nothing. We knew, from the different examinations of the state prisoners before the Privy Council, and from conversations with ministers, that Government was already in possession of all the important knowledge which they could obtain from us. From whence they derived their information was not entirely known to us, but it is now manifest that *Reynolds*, *McGinn*, and *Hughes*—not to speak of the minor informers—had put them in possession of every material fact respecting the internal state of the Union; and it was from particular circumstances well known to one of us, and entirely believed by the rest, that its external relations had been betrayed to the English Cabinet, through the agency of a foreigner with whom we negotiated.

“This was even so little disguised that, on the preceding 12th of March, the contents of a memoir which had been prepared by one of the undersigned at Hamburg and transmitted thence to Paris, were minutely detailed to him by Mr. Cooke. Nevertheless, those with whom we negotiated seemed extremely anxious for our communications. Their reasons for this anxiety may have been many; but two, particularly, suggested themselves to our minds. They obviously wished to give proof to the enemies of an Irish republic and of Irish independence of the facts with which they were themselves well acquainted; while, at the same time, they concealed from the world their real sources of intelligence. Nor do we believe we are uncharitable in attributing to them the hope and wish of rendering unpopular and suspected men in whom the United Irishmen had been accustomed to place an almost unbounded confidence. The injurious consequences of Government succeeding in both these objects

\* The event preceding the massacre of the capitulated body of the United Irishmen, on the Rath of the Curragh of Kildare, by the command of Major-General Sir James Duff, executed chiefly by the yeomanry cavalry of Captain Bagot, and the *Fox-hunters’ Corps*, commanded by Lord Roden.



were merely personal; and, as they were no more, though they were revolting and hateful to the last degree, we did not hesitate to devote ourselves that we might make terms for our country.

“What were these terms? That it should be rescued from civil and military execution; that a truce should be obtained for liberty, which she so much required. There was also another strongly impelling motive for entering into this agreement. If Government, on the one hand, was desirous of rousing its dependents by a display of the vigorous and well-concerted measures that were taken for subverting its authority and shaking off the English yoke; so we, on the other hand, were not less solicitous for the vindication of our cause in the eyes of the liberal, the enlightened, and patriotic. We perceived that, in making a fair and candid development of those measures, we should be enabled boldly to avow and justify the cause of Irish union, as being founded upon the purest principles of benevolence, and as aiming only at the liberation of Ireland. We felt that we could rescue our brotherhood from those foul imputations which had been industriously ascribed to it—the pursuit of the most unjust objects by means of the most flagitious crime.

“If our country has not actually benefited to the extent of our wishes and of our stipulations, let it be remembered that this has not been owing to the *compact*, but to the *breach of the compact*—the gross and flagrant breach of it, both as to the letter and spirit, in violation of every principle of plighted faith and honour.

“Having been called upon to fulfil our part of the compact, a stop being put to all further trials and executions, a memoir was drawn up and signed by two of the undersigned, together with another of the body (they being selected by Government for that purpose), and was presented to Mr. Cooke on the 4th of August. It was very hastily prepared in a prison, and, of course, not so complete and accurate as it might otherwise have been, but sufficiently so to draw from Mr. Cooke an acknowledgment that it was a complete fulfilment of the agreement; though he said the Lord-Lieutenant wished to have it so altered as not to be a justification of the United Irishmen, which he said it manifestly was.

“Upon the refusal to alter it, Government thought proper to suppress it altogether, and adopted a plan which they

had already found convenient for promulgating, *not the entire truth*, but so much of the truth as accorded with their views, and whatever else they wished to have passed upon mankind under colour of authority for the truth. This was no other than examination before the secret committees of Parliament. By these committees several of us were examined; and, to our astonishment, we soon after saw in the newspapers, and have since seen in printed reports of these committees, misrepresented and garbled, and as far as relates to some of us, very untrue and fallacious statements of our testimony—even in some cases the very reverse of what was given. That no suspicion may attach to this assertion from its vagueness, such of us as were examined will, without delay, state the precise substance of our evidence on that occasion.

“The Irish Parliament thought fit, about the month of September in the same year, to pass an act to be founded expressly on this agreement. To the provisions of that law we do not think it worth while to allude, because their severity and injustice are lost in comparison with the enormous falsehood of its preamble. In answer to that, we most distinctly and formally deny that any of us did ever publicly or privately, directly or indirectly, *acknowledge crimes, retract opinions, or implore pardon*, as is therein most falsely stated. A full and explicit declaration to this effect would have been made public at the time, had it not been prevented by a message from Lord Cornwallis, delivered to one of the subscribers on the 12th of that month. Notwithstanding we had expressly stipulated, at the time of the negotiation, for the entire liberty of publication, in case we should find our conduct or motives misrepresented, yet this perfidious and inhuman message threatened that such declaration would be considered as a breach of the agreement on our part, and in that case the executions in *general should go on as formerly*.

“Thus was the truth stifled at the time; and we believe firmly that to prevent its publication has been one of the principal reasons why, in violation of the most solemn engagements, we were kept in close custody ever since, and transported from our native country against our consent.

“We conceive that to ourselves, to our cause, and to our country, and to posterity, we owe this brief statement of facts, in which we have suppressed everything that is not of a nature strictly vindicatory;



because our object in this publication is not to criminate, but to defend. As to their truth, we positively aver them, each for himself, as far as they fall within his knowledge, and we firmly believe the others to be the truth, and nothing but the truth."

The following part of the statement is in the handwriting of John Sweetman:—

"On the 12th of March, 1798, the deputies from several counties having met in Dublin, to deliberate upon some general measures for Union, were arrested in a body at Mr. Bond's, as were also many other of its principal agents, and put into a state of solitary confinement. Some of those persons were examined by the Privy Council, previous to their committal to prison; when it appeared, beyond a possibility of doubt, that the negotiations of the United Irishmen with France had been betrayed to the British Government. On the 30th, the kingdom was officially declared in a state of rebellion, and put under martial law. A proclamation from the Lord-Lieutenant had directed the military to use the most summary methods for repressing disturbances; and it was publicly notified by the commanders in some counties that, unless the people brought in their arms within ten days from the period of publication, large bodies of troops would be quartered on them, who should be licensed to live at free-quarters, and that other severities would be exercised to enforce acquiescence. In the latter end of May the united armed men of the County Kildare felt themselves obliged to take the field, and hostilities commenced between them and the King's forces on the 24th. About this time the Counties of Wexford and Wicklow were generally up, and those of Down, Derry, Antrim, Carlow, and Meath were preparing to rise. The appeal to arms in these counties was attended with various success on both sides; and the military were invested with further powers by a proclamation, issued by the Lord-Lieutenant and Council, directing the generals to punish all attacks upon the King's forces according to martial law, either by death or otherwise, as to them should seem expedient. For some time the people had the advantage in the field; but the defeat at New Ross on the 5th of June, at Antrim on the 7th, that of Arklow on the 9th, of Ballinahinch on the 12th, of Vinegar Hill on the 21st, and Kilconnell on the 26th, with the evacuation of Wexford, and some unsuccessful skirmishes which afterwards took place

in the County of Wicklow, removed all hope of maintaining the contest *for the present* with any probability of success. In the interim troops were arriving from England, and several regiments of English militia had volunteered their services for Ireland. About the end of June a proclamation was issued, promising pardon and protection to all persons, except the leaders, who should return to their allegiance and deliver up their arms, which, it was said, had a very general effect. A large body of the Kildare men had already surrendered to General Dundas, and on the 21st of July another party, with its leaders, capitulated to General Wilford. The King's troops by this time were victorious in every quarter; and the park of artillery which had been employed in the south had returned to the capital.

"It was now upwards of two months since the war broke out, during which time no attempt had been made by the French to land a force upon the coast, nor was there any satisfactory account then received that such a design was in contemplation. The expedition of Buonaparte and the forces under his command were already ascertained to have some part of the Mediterranean for their object. No other diversion was made by the French to distract the British power during this period. Military tribunals, composed of officers who, in many instances, as it was publicly admitted, had not exceeded the inconsiderate age of boyhood, were everywhere instituted, and a vast number of executions had been the consequence. The yeomen and soldiery, licensed to indulge their rancour and revenge, were committing those atrocious cruelties which unfortunately distinguish the character of civil warfare. The shooting of innocent peasants at their work was occasionally resorted to by them as a species of recreation—a practice so inhuman that, unless we had incontestible evidence of the fact, we never should have given it the slightest credence. During these transactions a special commission, under an act of Parliament, passed for the occasion, was sitting in the capital; and the trials having commenced, it was declared from the bench that to be proved an United Irishman was sufficient to subject the party to the penalty of death; and that any member of a baronial or other committee was accountable for every act done by the body to which he respectively belonged in its collective capacity, whether it was done without his cognizance, in his absence, or even at the extremity



of the land. As it was openly avowed that convictions would be sought for only through the medium of informers, the Government used every influence to dignify the character of this wretched class of beings in the eyes of those who were selected to decide on the lives of the accused; and they so effectually succeeded as to secure implicit respect to whatever any of them chose to swear, from juries so appointed, so prepossessed. It was made a point by the first connections of Government to flatter those wretches, and some peers of the realm were known to have hailed the arch-apostate Reynolds with the title of 'Saviour of his country.'"

The following part of the statement is in the handwriting of William James MacNeven:—

"In the case of Mr. Bond, the jury, with an indecent precipitation, returned a verdict of guilty on the 23d of July, and on the 25th he was sentenced to die. Byrne was also ordered for execution. In this situation of our affairs a negotiation was opened with Government, and proceeded in through the medium of Mr. Dobbs. An agreement was in consequence concluded and signed, which, among other things, stipulated for the lives of Byrne and Bond; but Government thought fit to annul this by the execution of Byrne. As, however, the main object, *the putting a stop to the useless effusion of blood*, was still attainable, it was deemed right to open a second negotiation. In its progress, Government having insisted on some dishonourable requisitions, which were rejected with indignation, occasioned the failure of this also. It was, however, proposed by them to renew it again, and deputies from the jails were appointed to confer with the official servants of the Crown. A meeting accordingly took place at the Castle on the 29th of July, when the final agreement was concluded and exchanged.

"In addition to the *fulfilment to the letter* of this agreement, the official servants of the Crown pledged the faith of Government for two things—one that the result and end of that measure should be the putting a stop to the effusion of blood, and that all executions should cease, except in cases of wilful murder; the other was, that the conditions of the agreement should be liberally interpreted. The agreement was, in the course of a day or two, generally signed by the prisoners.

"Having thus stated the facts, we pro-

ceed to declare our reasons for entering into and ratifying this agreement:—*First.* Because we had seen, with great affliction, that in the course of the appeal to arms, while four or five counties out of the thirty-two were making head against the whole of the King's forces, no effectual disposition was manifested to assist them, owing, as we believe, to the extreme difficulty of assembling, and the want of authentic information as to the real state of affairs. *Second.* Because the concurring or quiescent spirit of the English people enabled their Government to send not only a considerable additional regular force, but also many regiments of English militia into Ireland. *Third.* Because it was evident that in many instances the want of military knowledge in the leaders had rendered the signal valour of the people fruitless. *Fourth.* Because, notwithstanding it was well known in France that the revolution had commenced in Ireland—an event that they were previously taught to expect—no attempt whatever was made by them to land any force during the two months which the contest had lasted, nor was any account received that it was their intention even shortly to do so. *Fifth.* Because, that by the arrest of many of the deputies and chief agents of the Union, and by the absence of others, the funds necessary for the undertaking were obstructed or uncollected, and hence arose insurmountable difficulties. *Sixth.* Because, from the several defeats at New Ross and Wexford, no doubt remained on our minds that further resistance, for the present, was not only vain, but nearly abandoned. *Seventh.* Because we were well assured that the proclamation of amnesty issued on the 29th of June had caused great numbers to surrender their arms, and take the oath of allegiance. *Eighth.* Because juries were so packed, justice so perverted, and the testimony of the basest informers so respected, that trial was but a mockery, and arraignment but the tocsin for execution. *Ninth.* Because we were convinced by the official servants of the Crown, and by the evidence given on the trials, that Government was already in possession of our external and internal transactions. The former they obtained, as we believe, through the perfidy of some agents of the French Government at Hamburg; the latter through informers who had been more or less confidential in all our affairs. *Tenth, and final.* Every-day accounts of the murders of our most virtuous and energetic countrymen assailed our ears; many were perishing



on the scaffold, under pretext of martial or other law, but many more the victims of individual Orange hatred and revenge. To stop this torrent of calamity, to preserve to Ireland her best blood . . . we determined to make a sacrifice of no trivial value—we agreed to abandon our country, our families, and our friends.

“And now we feel ourselves further called upon to declare that an act, passed in Ireland during the autumn of 1798, reciting our names, and asserting that we had ‘retracted our opinions, acknowledged our crimes, and implored pardon,’ is founded upon a gross and flagrant calumny. Neither we, the undersigned, nor any of our fellow-prisoners, so far as we know or believe, having ever done either the one or the other; and we solemnly assert that we never were consulted about that act, its provisions, or preamble; and that no copy of it was ever sent to us by any servant of the Crown—though repeatedly promised by the Under-Secretary—nor by any other person. On the contrary, it had, unknown to us, passed the House of Commons, when one of us (Samuel Neilson), having seen by mere accident an abstract of it in an English newspaper, remonstrated with the servants of the Crown on the falsity of the preamble, and was silenced only by a message from the Lord-Lieutenant, that it was his positive determination to annul the agreement and *proceed with the executions, &c.*, if any further notice whatever was taken of the preamble, or if one word was published on the subject. We did not conceive ourselves warranted, situated as things then were, in being instrumental to a renewal of bloodshed. We have ever since been constrained to silence; for, in violation of a solemn agreement, we have been kept *close prisoners*.

“To our country and to our posterity, we felt that we owed this declaration; and to their judgment upon our conduct and motives we bow with respectful submission.”

These gentlemen were all still kept close prisoners. Three of them, Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O’Connor, and Dr. MacNeven, were twice, in the course of the year 1798, brought up and examined, as already described, before secret Committees of both Houses; and in April, 1799, were sent to Fort-George, a strong place near Inverness, in the Highlands of Scotland, where they were kept prisoners until the Peace of Amiens. The names of the Fort-George prisoners were:—

- THOMAS ADDIS EMMET.
- ARTHUR O’CONNOR.
- ROGER O’CONNOR.
- WILLIAM JAMES MACNEVEN.
- JOHN SWEETMAN.
- MATTHEW DOWLING.
- JOHN CHAMBERS.
- EDWARD HUDSON.
- GEORGE CUMMING.
- SAMUEL NEILSON.
- THOMAS RUSSELL.
- ROBERT SIMMS.
- WILLIAM TENNENT.
- ROBERT HUNTER.
- HUGH WILSON.
- JOHN SWEENEY.
- JOSEPH CUTHBERT.
- WILLIAM STEELE DIXON.
- JOSEPH CORMICK.

“We were selected,” says Dr. Steele Dixon, in his narrative, “from the three provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster, but principally from the city of Dublin and town of Belfast. We comprehended in our body three magistrates, three barristers, two physicians, one attorney, one apothecary, one printer and bookseller, one printer and proprietor of a newspaper, one dentist, one military captain, one runner to a bank, one merchant tailor, and one Presbyterian minister, with an eminent porter brewer, two wholesale merchants, one broker, and two young gentlemen without profession, trade, or calling. . . I should have added, a clergyman of the Church of England, as Arthur O’Connor was ordained as such previous to his being called to the bar; and as Episcopal ordination impresses an indelible character, he not only then was, and now is, but ever must be, a *clergyman*. Of our circumstances, I shall only say that we *had* all been *independent*, most of us *respectable* in our professions; some possessed of large capitals in trade, and others of considerable landed property. Perhaps it may not be amiss to mention here that, as we were selected from the three principal provinces of Ireland, we were respectively members of the three principal churches in the kingdom, and which alone Government has yet acknowledged *as churches*. Nor is it unworthy of notice that the number of Catholics, Protestants, and Presbyterians in our little colony was in an *inverse ratio* of the number of each denomination in Ireland at large. Perhaps the proportion may be stated as follows, though not correctly:—

Catholics (two-thirds of the people),	prisoners, . . .	4
Presbyterians (more than one-fifth of the people),	prisoners, . . . . .	6
Protestants (less than one-seventh of the people),	prisoners, . . . . .	10



## CHAPTER IX.

1798.

Parliament—The Acts of Attainder—French Landing under Humbert—Killala—Conduct of the little French Army—Ballina—The Races of Castlebar—Panic and Rout of the British Force—French give a Ball—Lord Cornwallis collects a great Army—Marches to meet the French—Encounters them at Ballinamuck—Defeat and Capture of the French—Recovery of Ballina—Slaughter—Courts-Martial, &c.—End of the Insurrections of 1798—New French Expedition—Commodore Bompard—T. W. Tone—Encounter British Fleet at mouth of Lough Swilly—Battle—The *Hoche* Captured—Tone a Prisoner—Recognized by Sir George Hill—Carried to Dublin in Irons—Tried by Court-Martial—Condemned to be Hanged—His Address to the Court—Asks as a favour to be Shot—Refused by Cornwallis—Suicide in Prison.

IN the midst of this reign of terror and of vengeance, Parliament continued to sit from time to time. Lord Castlereagh's majority in Parliament had its functions to discharge, as well as the "Major's People," in the general system of operations which were all to lead towards, and end in, the one grand point—a Legislative Union. On the 18th of July Lord Castlereagh, after a long speech on the rebellion in general, and its atrocities (which were all, according to him, on the part of the people), proposed that a measure should be brought in to grant compensation to such of His Majesty's *loyal* subjects as had sustained losses in their property during the insurrection. This Bill was brought in, was passed, and commissioners were appointed for carrying it into effect. On the 27th the Attorney-General brought in a Bill for the attainder of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Cornelius Grogan, and Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey, in order that their estates might be forfeited. All efforts in opposition to this new procedure against men who were all dead, and had never been convicted of any crime, proved quite fruitless. It was the informer Reynolds, who had been implicitly trusted by the unsuspecting Lord Edward, that proved the case against him, to the satisfaction of the Committee. Curran was heard in defence, on the part of Lady Pamela Fitzgerald and her children, and made a very strong argument. On the unheard-of nature of this species of proceeding, he said—"Upon the previous and important question—namely, the guilt of Lord Edward (without the full proof of which no punishment can be just)—I have been asked by the Committee if I have any defence to go into. . . . Sir, I now answer the question: I have no defensive evidence—it is impos-

sible that I should. I have often of late gone to the dungeon of the captive, but *never have I gone to the grave of the dead*, to receive instructions for his defence; nor, in truth, have I ever before been at the trial of a dead man." It was all in vain; that Parliament was quite ready to make a new precedent, in order to starve the widows and children of dead rebels. The bills of Attainder passed.\* Besides these, the Parliament was busy with its "Fugitive Bill," and its "Banishment Bill," excepting from all amnesty certain United Irishmen not then in the country, and certain others who were to be allowed to exile themselves. These two lists comprehend one hundred and forty names, including Napper Tandy, Wolfe Tone, Richard McCormick, Dean Swift, Lewins, Emmet, Neilson, O'Connor, &c.; and all the names may be found in one of the appendixes of Madden. The last-named gentlemen, indeed, before their banishment, had some years to pass in the dreary fortress of Fort-George.

The whole country was still under martial law; many were suffering the extreme penalty, and that wholesome feeling, called by Barrington "an impression of horror," was sufficiently prevalent for all the purposes of Mr. Pitt, when his policy was materially served by a new and most pitiful French invasion, which came too late to serve Ireland, but was in admirable time to help England.

Fortunately for England, and, therefore, unhappily for Ireland, the French Republic was, during the year 1798, in its most helpless and chaotic condition. Napoleon was in Egypt; and the miserable Directory, with neither money nor credit, was lamentably unequal to the exigencies of the time. Wolfe Tone was still in France. As the news of each arrest, and of each action, successively reached France, he urged the generals and Government to assist the gallant and desperate struggle of his countrymen, and pressed on them the necessity of availing themselves of the favourable opportunity

\* A remnant of Lord Edward's property was saved for his widow by Mr. Ogilvie, Lord Edward's stepfather, who bought it when sold in Chancery to satisfy a mortgage. But what was saved was a trifle; and Lady Pamela died in poverty. As to Mr. Grogan, who possessed a large estate, Sir Jonah Barrington says:—

"This Attainder Bill was one of the most illegal and unconstitutional acts ever promoted by any government; but after much more than £10,000 costs to Crown officers, and to Lord Norbury as Attorney-General, had been extracted from the property, the estates were restored to the surviving brother."

The surviving brother had fought on the royalist side during the insurrection.



which flew so rapidly by. They began their preparations without delay; but money, arms, ammunition, and ships, all were wanting. By the close of June, the insurrection was nearly crushed, and it was not till the beginning of July that Tone was called up to Paris, to consult with the Ministers of the War and Navy Departments on the organization of a new expedition. At this period his journal closes, and the subsequent events are elsewhere recorded.

The plan of the new expedition was to dispatch small detachments from several ports, in the hope of keeping up the insurrection, and distracting the attention of the enemy, until some favourable opportunity should occur for landing the main body, under General Kilmaine. General Humbert, with about one thousand men, was quartered for this purpose at Rochelle; General Hardy, with three thousand, at Brest; and Kilmaine, with nine thousand, remained in reserve. This plan was judicious enough, if it had been taken up in time. But long before the first of these expeditions was ready to sail, the insurrection was subdued in every quarter.

The indignation of the unfortunate Irish was just and extreme against that French Government which had so repeatedly promised them aid, and now appeared to desert them in their utmost need.

A miserable expedition, at the instance of Napper Tandy, was at length fitted out, of which Tone's son thus speaks:—

“The final ruin of the expedition was hurried by the precipitancy and indiscretion of a brave but ignorant and imprudent officer. This anecdote, which is not generally known, is a striking instance of the disorder, indiscipline, and disorganization which began to prevail in the French army. Humbert, a gallant soldier of fortune, but whose heart was better than his head, impatient of the delays of his Government, and fired by the recitals of the Irish refugees, determined to begin the enterprise on his own responsibility, and thus oblige the Directory to second or to abandon him.”

With three or four ships, about one thousand men, and a small force of artillery—without instructions, and without any assurance of being supported, he compelled the captains to select for the most desperate attempt which is, perhaps, recorded in history. Three Irishmen accompanied him, Matthew Tone, Bartholomew Teeling, of Lisburn, and Sullivan, nephew to Madgett, whose name is often mentioned in Tone's memoirs. On the 22d of August they made the coast of Connaught, and

landing in the Bay of Killala, immediately stormed and occupied that little town.

The Protestant Bishop of Killala was then at his house, called the Castle, and there was with him a company of parsons, holding a visitation. It is from his narrative that we learn the details; and he especially bears witness to the excellent conduct of the French, both officers and men; although his testimony to this effect was “at the expense of his own translation.”\*

The French entered the bay under English colours; and the feint succeeded so well that two of the bishop's sons, with the Port-Surveyor, took a fishing-boat and went out with the intention of going on board one of the ships; they were presently surprised to find themselves prisoners. Between seven and eight, a terrified messenger came and told the bishop that the French were landed, and that near three hundred of them were within a mile of the town. The cavalry officers rode off directly, in full speed, with the intelligence to Ballina. The yeomanry and fencibles drew up before the castle-gate, and resolutely advanced into the main street to meet the French advance-guard.

Borne down by numbers, and seeing two of their corps fall, they were seized with a panic, and fled. Kirkwood and nineteen yeomen were taken, and ordered into close custody at the castle. All opposition being now at an end, the French General marched into the castle-yard at the head of his officers, and demanded to see the bishop, who, fortunately, was conversant with the French language. Humbert desired him to be under no apprehension for himself or his people; they should be treated with respectful attention, and nothing should be taken by the French troops but what was absolutely necessary for their support; a promise which, as long as those troops continued in Killala, was most religiously observed.

Mr. Kirkwood was examined as to the supplies that could be drawn from the town and neighbourhood to assist the progress of the invaders. The queries were interpreted by some Irish officers who came with the French, to which he answered with such an appearance of frankness and candour, that he gained the esteem of the French General, who told him he was on his parole, and should have full permission to return to his family, and attend to his private affairs. The conjugal affection of this gentleman on the next day made him forget his parole, and go to attend his sick wife,

\* Sir J. Barrington. *Rise and Fall, &c.*



who, from the dread of the enemy, had secreted herself in the mountains. Enraged at this breach of parole, the French took everything they wanted out of his stores—oats, salt, and iron, to a considerable amount; nor had they been careful to prevent depredations by the rebels in his dwelling-house, as they would have done if he had not fled; so that when he returned he found it a wreck.

The bishop's castle was made the headquarters of the French General. But such excellent discipline was constantly maintained by these invaders while they remained in Killala, that with every temptation to plunder, which the time and the number of valuable articles within their reach presented to them—a sideboard of plate and glasses, a hall filled with hats, whips, and greatcoats, as well of the guests as of the family, not one single article of private property was carried away.

On the morning after his arrival, Humbert began his military operations by pushing forward to Ballina a detachment of a hundred men, forty of whom he had mounted on the best horses he could seize. A green flag was mounted over the castle-gate, with the inscription, *Erin go Bragh*, importing to invite the country people to join the French. Their cause was to be forwarded by the immediate delivery of arms, ammunition, and clothing to the new levies of the country. Property was to be inviolable. Ready money was to come over in the ships expected every day from France. In the meantime, whatever was bought was paid for in drafts on the future Directory.

Though cash was wanting, the promise of clothing and arms to the recruits was made good to a considerable extent. The first that offered their service received complete clothing to the amount of about a thousand. The next comers, at least as many, received arms and clothing, but no shoes and stockings. To the last, arms only were given. And of arms, Colonel Charost assured the bishop, five thousand and five hundred stand were delivered.

The Right Rev. narrator thus describes the little army of invaders:—

“Intelligence, activity, temperance, patience, to a surprising degree, appeared to be combined in the soldiery that came over with Humbert, together with the exactest obedience to discipline; yet, if you except the grenadiers, they had nothing to catch the eye. Their stature, for the most part, was low, their complexion pale and sallow, their clothes much the worse for the wear; to a superficial observer they would have appeared almost

incapable of enduring any hardship. These were the men, however, of whom it was presently observed that they could be well content to live on bread or potatoes, to drink water, to make the stones of the street their bed, and to sleep in their clothes, with no cover but the canopy of heaven. One half of their number had served in Italy, under Buonaparte, the rest were from the army of the Rhine.”

The French, and the Irish officers who accompanied them, did not find the Connaught people so well prepared to receive them, nor so well organized as they had hoped and expected. The general insurrection which was just suppressed had not penetrated into Mayo at all; yet the bishop mentions some circumstances to show that the landing was not unexpected by the peasantry of those parts. At any rate, a French flag displayed anywhere in Ireland was sure to attract the fighting part of the population around it; as, indeed, the same phenomenon would do at this day. The bishop, whose professional prejudices may lead him to exaggerate a little, gives a curious account of the astonishment of the French when they found their Irish allies were devout Catholics—as if they had not known this before. He says:—

“The contrast with regard to religious sentiments between the French and their Irish allies was extremely curious. The atheist despised and affronted the bigot; but the wonder was how the zealous papist should come to any terms of agreement with a set of men who boasted openly in our hearing, that they had just driven Mr. Pope out of Italy, and did not expect to find him again so suddenly in Ireland. It astonished the French officers to hear the recruits, when they offered their services, declare that they were come to take arms for France and the Blessed Virgin.”

Humbert left Killala with a quantity of ammunition in the possession of two hundred men and six officers, and on the 25th, about seven o'clock in the evening, took possession of Ballina, from whence the garrison fled on his approach. Here he left behind him an officer named True, with a very small part of the French and several of the Irish recruits. Humbert was sensible of the advantage of pushing forward with vigour, and a rapid progress into the interior could alone bring the natives to his standard. At Ballina many hundred peasants repaired to the French standard, and with eagerness received arms and uniforms. The French commander determined to attack the forces at Castlebar, and began his march on the morning



of the 26th, with eight hundred of his own men, and less than fifteen hundred Irish.

There was then in Castlebar an army of six thousand men, under command of General Lake, including some fine militia regiments, with the Marquis of Ormond, General Lord Hutchinson, the Earls of Longford and Granard, and Lord Roden, with his boasted regiment of cavalry called the "Foxhunters," who had shown themselves capable of at least riding down flying and disarmed peasants in Meath and Kildare. It was a force with which General Lake reasonably enough thought he should give a good account of eight hundred French and some raw levies of Connaught men. The English commander expected the French to advance by the high road leading to Castlebar; but Humbert, having good guides, took the way over the pass of Barnagee westward, and so appeared, early in the morning, not precisely at the point where he was looked for.

General Lake with his staff had just arrived and taken command (as an elder officer), as Lord Hutchinson had determined to march the ensuing day and end the question, by a capture of the French detachment. The change of commanders had occasioned discontent and demoralization amongst the troops; at least, that is one of the reasons or excuses which loyalist writers have been fain to allege for the shameful conduct of the British force in the action which followed. Plowden says on this subject:—

"There is no question but that a very serious difference happened previous to the disgraceful action at Castlebar between General (now Lord) Hutchinson and General Lake; and that the army in general was strongly affected by the former's having been superseded in his command by the latter. General Hutchinson was acquainted with every inch of the country, and had prepared an able and efficient plan for stopping the progress of the enemy; he commanded alike the confidence of the army and the affections of the natives. As cruelty and cowardice are ever inseparable, it was unlikely that troops which had debased themselves by massacring the fugitive, surrendered or unoffending, by burning their houses and destroying their property, by torturing, strangling, and flogging the suspected to extort confessions, should, when left to themselves or under the command of the promoter of that savage warfare, bravely face an enemy upon whom they dared not exercise their wonted atrocities."

However that might be, on the appear-

ance of the French and Irish deploying from the pass of Barnagee, Sir Jonah Barrington describes thus the singular action that followed:—

"The troops were moved to a position about a mile from Castlebar, which, to an unskilled person, seemed unassailable. They had scarcely been posted with nine pieces of cannon, when the French appeared on the opposite side of a small lake, descending the hill in columns, directly in front of the English. Our artillery played on them with effect. The French kept up a scattered fire of musketry, and took up the attention of our army by irregular movements. In half an hour, however, our troops were alarmed by a movement of small bodies to turn their left, which, being covered by walls, they had never apprehended. The orders given were either mistaken or misbelieved; the line wavered, and in a few minutes the whole of the royal army was completely routed; the flight of the infantry was as that of a mob, all the royal artillery was taken, our army fled to Castlebar, the heavy cavalry galloped amongst the infantry and Lord Jocelyn's Light Dragoons, and made the best of their way, through thick and thin, to Castlebar, and towards Tuam, pursued by such of the French as could get horses to carry them.

"About nine hundred French and some peasants took possession of Castlebar without resistance, except from a few Highlanders stationed in the town, who were soon destroyed."

So violent was the panic of the British that they never halted till they reached Tuam, forty miles from the field of battle. They lost the whole of their artillery—fourteen pieces—five stand of colours, and in killed, wounded, and prisoners, eighteen officers and three hundred and fifty men, but the French calculated the loss of the enemy at six hundred. The fugitives renewed their march, or rather flight, from Tuam on the same night, and proceeded to Athlone, where an officer of carbineers with sixty of his men arrived at one o'clock on Tuesday, the 29th, having performed a march of above seventy English miles—the distance of Athlone from Castlebar—in twenty-seven hours. The whole battle and rout are familiarly known to this day in Connaught as the "*Races of Castlebar*."

The French, having thus easily possessed themselves of the county town of Mayo, immediately gave a ball and supper. Sir Jonah Barrington says:—

"The native character of the French never showed itself more strongly than after this action. When in full possession



of the large town of Castlebar, they immediately set about putting their persons in the best order, and the officers advertised a ball and supper that night for the ladies of the town; this, it is said, was well attended, decorum in all points was strictly preserved, they paid ready money for everything; in fact, the French army established the French character wherever they occupied."

But they thought of something else besides amusement. With that love of order which is a distinguishing trait of their nation, they established districts, each under its own elected magistrate; they repressed any disposition which showed itself on the part of the people to maltreat the loyalist inhabitants, if indeed such disposition existed as the bishop affirms. A provincial government was at once established, with Mr. Moore, of Moore Hall, as President, and proclamations were issued in the name of the "Irish Republic."

From the terror which this handful of French troops inspired, we may form some idea of the effects which might have followed the landing of even Humbert's little force anywhere in the south of Ireland, while the Wexford men were gallantly holding their own county; or we may conjecture what might have been the result if Humbert had brought with him ten thousand men instead of one thousand, even in that month of August, crushed as the people had been by the savage suppression of their insurrection,—or if Grouchy had marched inland with his six thousand men at the moment when the people were eager to begin the rising, and the English had but three thousand regular troops in the island. It seemed as if England were destined to have all the luck, and either by favour of the elements or the miscalculations of her enemies, to escape, one after another, the deadly perils that for ever beset her empire.

As it was, this arrival of Humbert, even followed by so brilliant a victory, was really so much profit to the British Government. Barrington truly remarks:—

"The defeat of Castlebar, however, was a victory to the Viceroy; it revived all the horrors of the rebellion, which had been subsiding, and the desertion of the militia regiments tended to impress the gentry with an idea that England alone could protect the country."

The Marquis Cornwallis determined to collect a great army, and march in imposing force; but he did not hasten his movements so much as it was thought he might have done; and, in the meantime,

the French and insurgents were profiting by the delay. It was said that forty thousand of the Westmeath people were preparing to assemble at the Crooked Wood, in that county, so as to join the French on their passage, and march on the metropolis.

At length the Marquis was ready; and having assured himself of the presence of twenty thousand men on his line of march, he thought himself strong enough to encounter the eight hundred audacious Frenchmen and their Irish allies. These latter were by no means increasing, but rather diminishing since the day of Castlebar; and indeed, at no time exceeded two thousand men—a circumstance which greatly surprised and disgusted the French.

The Marquis proceeded on the 30th of August on the road to Castlebar, and arrived on the 4th of September at Hollymount, fourteen miles distant from Castlebar; in the evening of that day he received intelligence, that the enemy had abandoned his post, and marched to Foxford.

The advanced guard of the French having arrived at Coloony, was opposed on the 5th by Colonel Vereker, of the city of Limerick militia, who had marched from Sligo for the purpose, with about two hundred infantry, thirty of the Twenty-fourth Regiment of Light Dragoons, and two currie guns. After a smart action of about an hour's continuance, he was obliged to retreat, with the loss of his artillery, to Sligo.

This opposition, though attended with defeat to the opposers, is supposed to have caused the French General to relinquish his design on Sligo. He directed his march by Drumnahair towards Manorhamilton, in the County of Leitrim, leaving on the road, for the sake of expedition, three six-pounders dismounted, and throwing five pieces more of artillery over the bridge at Drumnahair into the river. In approaching Manorhamilton he suddenly wheeled to the right, taking his way by Drumkerin, perhaps with design of attempting, if possible, to reach Granard, in the County of Longford, where an insurrection had taken place. Crawford's troops hung so close on the rearguard of the French as to come to action with it on the 7th, between Drumshambo and Ballynomore, in which action they were repulsed with some loss, and admonished to observe more caution in the pursuit.

The French army, passing the Shannon at Ballintra, and halting some hours in the night at Claone, arrived at Ballinamuck,



County Longford, on the 8th of September, so closely followed by the troops of Colonel Crawford and General Lake, that its rearguard was unable to break the bridge at Ballintra, to impede the pursuit; while Lord Cornwallis, with the grand army, crossed the same river at Carrick-on-Shannon, marched by Mohill to Saint-Johnstown, in the County of Longford, in order to intercept the enemy in front, on his way to Granard; or, should he proceed, to surround him with an army of thirty thousand men. In this desperate situation, Humbert arranged his forces, with no other object, as it must be presumed, than to maintain the honour of the French arms. The rearguard having been attacked by Colonel Crawford, about two hundred of the French infantry surrendered. The rest continued to defend themselves for above half an hour, when, on the appearance of the main body of General Lake's army, they also surrendered, after they had made Lord Roden, with a body of dragoons, a prisoner. His lordship had precipitately advanced into the French lines to obtain their surrender. The Irish insurgents who had accompanied the French to this fatal field, being excluded from quarter, fled in all directions, and were pursued, with the slaughter of about five hundred men, which seems much less to exceed the truth than the returns of slain in the south-eastern parts of the island. About one thousand five hundred insurgents were with the French army at Ballinamuck, at the time of the surrender of Humbert. The loss of the King's troops was officially stated at three privates killed, twelve wounded, three missing, and one officer wounded. The troops of General Humbert were found, when prisoners, to consist of seven hundred and forty-six privates and ninety-six officers, having sustained a loss of about two hundred men since their landing at Killala on the 22d of August.

Vengeful executions began on the field of battle. It appears that, on the day of the "Races of Castlebar," a considerable part of the Louth and Kilkenny regiments, not finding it convenient to retreat, thought the next best thing they could do would be to join the victors, which they immediately did, and in one hour were completely equipped as French riflemen. About ninety of those men were hung by Lord Cornwallis at Ballinamuck. One of them defended himself by insisting "that it was the army, and not he, who were deserters; that whilst he was fighting hard, they all ran away, and left him to be murdered."

A Mr. Blake, who had been an officer in the British army, was also executed on the field. Bartholomew Teeling and Matthew Tone (brother of Theobald Wolfe Tone) were among the prisoners, and were both executed within a few days in Dublin. Mr. Moore, President of the Provincial Government, which had been instituted at Castlebar, was one of the prisoners at Ballinamuck, and was sentenced to banishment. Roger Maguire, one of the leaders of the Irish insurgents, was transported, and his father, a brewer, was hung.

The small French garrison which had been left in Killala still occupied that place, and great part of North Connaught continued in insurrection.

On the 22d of September, thirty-two days after the landing of the French army, and fifteen after its capture at Ballinamuck, a large body of troops arrived at Killala, under the command of Major-General Trench, who would have been still some days later in his arrival had he not been hastened by a message from the bishop, to announce the fearful apprehensions his lordship's family and the other loyalists were under.

The bishop's narrative of what followed indicates that the recovery of this place by the British forces was a scene rather of indiscriminate massacre than of combat. He describes how "a troop of fugitives in full race from Ballina, women and children, tumbled over one another to get into the castle, or into any house in the town where they might hope for a momentary shelter, continued for a painful length of time to give notice of the approach of an army."

There was, however, a momentary resistance.

The insurgents quitted their camp to occupy the rising ground close by the town, on the road to Ballina, and posted themselves under the low stone walls on each side, in such a manner as enabled them with great advantage to take aim at the King's troops. They had a strong guard also on the other side of the town towards Foxford, having probably received intelligence, which was true, that General Trench had divided his forces at Crosmolina, and sent one part of them by a detour of three miles, to intercept the fugitives that might take that course in their flight. This last detachment consisted chiefly of the Kerry militia, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Crosbie and Maurice Fitzgerald, the Knight of Kerry, their Colonel, the Earl of Glendore, attending the General.

The two divisions of the royal army



were supposed to make up about twelve hundred men, and they had five pieces of cannon. The number of the insurgents could not be ascertained. Many ran away before the engagement, while a very considerable number flocked into the town in the very heat of it, passing under the castle windows in view of the French officers on horseback, and running upon death with as little appearance of reflection or concern as if they were hastening to a show. About four hundred of these people fell in the battle, and immediately after it. Whence it may be conjectured that their entire number scarcely exceeded eight or nine hundred.

The whole scene passed in sight of the castle, and so near it that the family could distinctly hear the balls whistling by their ears.

The attempt at resistance lasted twenty minutes, when the insurgents scattered in two directions—some into the town, where they were shot down in the streets, some along the shore of the bay, where they were enfiladed by a gun placed in position for that purpose.

The court-martial began the day after, and sat in the house of Mr. Morrison. They had to try not less than seventy-five prisoners at Killala, and a hundred and ten at Ballina, besides those who might be brought in daily. The two first persons tried at this tribunal were General Bellew and Mr. Richard Bourke. The trial of these two gentlemen was short. They were found guilty on Monday evening, and hung the next morning in the park behind the castle.

So ended the last of the series of partial insurrections in Ireland in the year 1798. Little reliance is to be placed on the official accounts of the killed, wounded, and missing, in the several engagements and encounters. According to the most probable accounts to be had from the War Office, the number of the army lost in this rebellion amounts in the whole to nineteen thousand seven hundred men; and according to the general Government accounts of the total loss of the insurgents, it exceeded fifty thousand, without including women and children, great numbers of whom were shot down by the yeomanry or burned in their own houses. The mere loss of life, too, gives but a faint idea of the sufferings endured by the poor people. Many hundreds had been put to the torture, and lacerated by cruel scourging, to extort information. Never, perhaps, was any national insurrection in the world so savagely crushed; never was insurrection so thoroughly justified by the oppression which provoked it; and never were chiefs

of any insurrection more pure in their motives, more gallant, honourable, and self-sacrificing, than those whose bodies were now swinging upon gibbets, whose heads were grinning upon spikes, or who were languishing in various prisons, to expiate the crime of loving their country and hating its oppressors.

The policy of Mr. Pitt was now in full operation; and the "impression of horror" was strong and deep: indeed, the plans of the Minister were rather aided by the driftless and helpless French expeditions which the imbecile government of the Directory sent to help the insurgents, but which came too late, and arrived at the wrong places. Before narrating the measures of the Government with a view to the Legislative Union, it is necessary to tell how it fared with Theobald Wolfe Tone. The founder of the United Irish Society was not a man to evade the consequences and responsibilities of his own acts, nor to take his ease in France, where he held a high commission in the army, while his comrades were perishing on the field or on the gallows. He never for one moment relaxed his efforts to effect the great task of his life, which was to bring an adequate force of Frenchmen into Ireland, and so to stop and to punish the shocking atrocities, of which every new report tortured his soul.

The news of Humbert's attempt, as may well be imagined, threw the Directory into the greatest perplexity. They instantly determined, however, to hurry all their preparations, and send off at least the division of General Hardy, to second his efforts, as soon as possible. The report of his first advantages, which shortly reached them, augmented their ardour and accelerated their movements. But such was the state of the French navy and arsenals, that it was not until the 20th of September that this small expedition, consisting of one sail of the line and eight frigates, under Commodore Bompard, and three thousand men, under General Hardy, was ready for sailing. The news of Humbert's defeat had not yet reached France.

Paris was then crowded with Irish emigrants, eager for action. Some Irishmen embarked before Bompard, in a small and fast-sailing vessel, with Napper Tandy at their head. They reached, on the 16th of September, the Isle of Raghlin, on the north coast of Ireland, where they heard of Humbert's disaster: they merely spread some proclamations, and escaped to Norway. Three Irishmen only accompanied Tone in Hardy's flotilla; he alone was



embarked in the Admiral's vessel, the *Hoche*, the others were on board the frigates. These were Mr. T. Corbett, and MacGuire, two brave officers, who afterwards died in the French service, and a third gentleman, connected by marriage with his friend Russell.

At the period of this expedition Tone was hopeless of its success, and in the deepest despondency at the prospect of Irish affairs. Such was the wretched indiscretion of the Government that, before his departure, he read himself, in the *Bien Informé*, a Paris newspaper, a detailed account of the whole armament, where his own name was mentioned in full letters, with the circumstance of his being on board the *Hoche*. There was, therefore, no hope of secrecy. He had all along deprecated the idea of those attempts on a small scale. But he had also declared repeatedly, that if the Government sent only a corporal's guard, he felt it his duty to go along with them; he saw no chance of Kilmaine's large expedition being ready in any reasonable time, and therefore determined to accompany Hardy. His resolution was, however, deliberately taken, in case he fell into the hands of the enemy, never to suffer the indignity of a public execution. And his son, William Theobald Wolfe Tone, informs us that he had expressed himself to this effect "at dinner, in our own house, and in my mother's presence, a little before leaving Paris." \*

At length, about the 20th of September, 1798, that fatal expedition set sail from the Bay de Camaret. It consisted of the *Hoche*, seventy-four; *Loire*, *Resolue*, *Bellone*, *Coquille*, *Embuscade*, *Immortalité*, *Romaine*, and *Semillante*, frigates; and *Biche*, schooner, and aviso. To avoid the British fleets, Bompard, an excellent seaman, took a large sweep to the westward, and then to the north-east, in order to bear down on the northern coast of Ireland, from the quarter whence a French force would be least expected. He met, however, with contrary winds, and it appears that his flotilla was scattered; for on the 10th of October, after twenty days' cruise, he arrived off the entry of Loch Swilly, with the *Hoche*, the *Loire*, the *Resolue*, and the *Biche*. He was instantly signalled, and on the break of day next morning, 11th of October, before he could enter the bay or land his troops, he perceived the squadron of Sir John Borlase Warren, consisting of

six sail of the line, one razee of sixty guns, and two frigates, bearing down upon him. There was no chance of escape for the large and heavy man-of-war. Bompard gave instant signals to the frigates and schooner to retreat through shallow water, and prepared alone to honour the flag of his country and liberty by a desperate but hopeless defence. At that moment a boat came from the *Biche* for his last orders. That ship had the best chance to get off. The French officers all supplicated Tone to embark on board of her. "Our contest is hopeless," they observed; "we will be prisoners of war, but what will become of you?" "Shall it be said," replied he, "that I fled whilst the French were fighting the battles of my country?" He refused their offers, and determined to stand and fall with the ship. The *Biche* accomplished her escape.

The British Admiral dispatched two men-of-war, the razee and a frigate, after the *Loire* and *Resolue*; and the *Hoche* was soon surrounded by four sail of the line and a frigate, and began one of the most obstinate and desperate engagements which have ever been fought on the ocean. During six hours she sustained the fire of a whole fleet, till her masts and rigging were swept away, her scuppers flowed with blood, her wounded filled the cockpit, her shattered ribs yawned at each new stroke, and let in five feet of water in the hold; her rudder was carried off, and she floated a dismantled wreck on the waters. Her sails and cordage hung in shreds; nor could she reply with a single gun from her dismantled batteries to the unabating cannonade of the enemy. At length she struck. The *Resolue* and *Loire* were soon reached by the English fleet; the former was in a sinking condition; she made, however, an honourable defence. The *Loire* sustained three attacks, drove off the English frigates, and had almost effected her escape. At length, engaged by the *Anson*, razee of sixty guns, she struck, after an action of three hours, entirely dismasted. Of the other frigates, pursued in all directions, the *Bellone*, *Immortalité*, *Coquille*, and *Embuscade*, were taken; and the *Romaine* and *Semillante*, through a thousand dangers, reached separate ports in France.

During the action Tone commanded one of the batteries, and, according to the report of the officers who returned to France, fought with the utmost desperation, and as if he were courting death. When the ship struck, confounded with the other officers, he was not recognized for some time; for he had completely

\* *Memoirs of Wolfe Tone*. By his son. Published in Washington. The English edition is much mutilated.



acquired the language and appearance of a Frenchman. The two fleets were dispersed in every direction; nor was it till some days later that the *Hoche* was brought into Loch Swilly, and the prisoners landed and marched to Letterkenny. Yet rumours of his being on board must have been circulated, for the fact was public at Paris. But it was thought he had been killed in the action. It was at length a gentleman, well-known in the County Derry as a leader of the Orange party, and one of the chief magistrates in that neighbourhood, Sir George Hill, who had been his fellow-student in Trinity College, and knew his person, who undertook the task of discovering him. It is known that in Spain *grandeos* and noblemen of the first rank pride themselves in the functions of familiars, spies, and informers of the Holy Inquisition. It remained for Ireland to offer a similar example. The French officers were invited to breakfast with the Earl of Cavan, who commanded in that district. Tone sat undistinguished amongst them, when Sir George Hill entered the room, followed by police officers. Looking narrowly at the company, he singled out the object of his search, and, stepping up to him, said, "Mr. Tone, I am *very happy* to see you." Instantly rising, with the utmost composure he replied, "Sir George, I am happy to see you. How is Lady Hill and your family?"\* Beckoned into the next room by the police officers, an unexpected indignity awaited him. It was filled with military, and one General Lavau, who commanded them, ordered him to be ironed, declaring that, as on leaving Ireland to enter the French service he had not renounced his oath of allegiance, he remained a subject of Britain, and should be punished as a traitor. Seized with a momentary burst of indignation at such unworthy treatment and cowardly cruelty to a prisoner of war, he flung off his uniform, and cried, "These fetters shall never degrade the revered insignia of the free nation which I have served!" Resuming then his usual calm, he offered his limbs to the irons, and when they were fixed he exclaimed, "For the cause which I have embraced, I feel prouder to wear these chains than if I were decorated with the star and garter of England."

From Letterkenny he was hurried to Dublin without delay. Contrary to usual

custom, he was conveyed during the whole route, fettered and on horseback, under an escort of dragoons. The escort was composed of Cambridgeshire yeomanry cavalry, and commanded by a Captain Thackeray, afterwards a clergyman and Rector of Dundalk. He often, long afterwards, described this journey, and said that Tone was the most delightful companion he ever travelled with.

Though the reign of terror was drawing to a close, and Lord Cornwallis had restored some appearance of legal order and regular administration in the kingdom, a prisoner of such importance to the Irish Protestant Ascendancy party as the founder and leader of the United Irish Society, and the most formidable of their adversaries, was not to be trusted to the delays and common forms of law. Though the Court of King's Bench was then sitting, preparations were instantly made for trying him summarily before a court-martial. It has been erroneously stated that Tone imagined his French commission would be a protection to him, and that he pleaded it on his trial. He never, indeed, was legally condemned; for, though a subject of the Crown (not of Britain, but of Ireland), he was not a military man in that kingdom. He had taken no military oath; and of course the court-martial which tried him had no power to pronounce on his case, which belonged to the regular criminal tribunals. But his heart was sunk in despair at the total failure of his hopes, and he did not wish to survive them. To die with honour was his only wish; and his only request, to be shot like a soldier. For this purpose he preferred himself to be tried by a court-martial; and proffered his French commission, not to defend his life, but as a proof of his rank, as he stated himself on his trial.

If further proof were required that he was perfectly aware of his fate, according to the English law, his own journals, written during the Bantry Bay expedition, afford an incontestible one. (See *Journal of December 26, 1796.*) "If we are taken, my fate will not be a mild one; the best I can expect is to be shot as an *émigré rentré*, unless I have the good fortune to be killed in the action; for most assuredly, if the enemy will have us, he must fight for us. Perhaps I may be reserved for a trial, for the sake of striking terror into others, in which case I shall be hanged as a traitor, and embowelled, &c. As to the embowelling, '*Je m'en fiche.*' If ever they hang me, they are welcome to embowel me if they please. These are pleasant prospects!

\* Dr. Madden points out that this Sir George Hill was a regular secret agent of the Government, and quotes several payments made to him, and through him to other agents, out of the Secret Service money. See accounts of Secret Service money in Madden's work.



Nothing on earth could sustain me now but the consciousness that I am engaged in a just and righteous cause."

Tone appeared before this court in the uniform of a *Chef de Brigade* (Colonel). The firmness and cool serenity of his whole deportment gave to the awe-struck assembly the measure of his soul. Nor could his bitterest enemies, whatever they deemed of his political principles, and of the necessity of striking a great example, deny him the praise of determination and magnanimity.

The members of the Court having taken the usual oath, the Judge Advocate proceeded to inform the prisoner that the court-martial before which he stood was appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant of the kingdom, to try whether he had or had not acted traitorously against His Majesty, to whom, as a natural-born subject, he owed all allegiance, from the very fact of his being born in the kingdom. And, according to the usual form, he called upon him to plead guilty or not guilty.

The prisoner admitted all the facts, "stripping the charge of its technical word *traitorously*." He would make no defence, and give no trouble, but asked leave to read an address, giving his own account of his conduct. This address is given at full length in his son's *Memoir*, and is in these words:—

"Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Court-martial,—I mean not to give you the trouble of bringing judicial proof to convict me legally of having acted in hostility to the Government of His Britannic Majesty in Ireland. I admit the fact. From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the Irish nation; and felt convinced that whilst it lasted this country could never be free nor happy. My mind has been confirmed in this opinion by the experience of every succeeding year, and the conclusions which I have drawn from every fact before my eyes. In consequence, I determined to apply all the powers which my individual efforts could move, in order to separate the two countries.

"That Ireland was not able, of herself, to throw off the yoke, I knew. I therefore sought for aid wherever it was to be found. In honourable poverty I rejected offers which, to a man in my circumstances, might be considered highly advantageous. I remained faithful to what I thought the cause of my country, and sought in the French Republic an ally to rescue three millions of my countrymen from—"

The President here interrupted the

prisoner, observing that this language was neither relevant to the charge nor such as ought to be delivered in a public court. One member said, it seemed calculated only to inflame the minds of a certain description of people (the United Irishmen), many of whom might probably be present; and that, therefore, the Court ought not to suffer it. The Judge Advocate said he thought that if Mr. Tone meant this paper to be laid before His Excellency, in way of *extenuation*, it must have quite a contrary effect, if any of the foregoing part was suffered to remain.

Tone.—"I shall urge this topic no further, since it seems disagreeable to the Court; but shall proceed to read the few words which remain."

General Loftus.—"If the remainder of your address, Mr. Tone, is of the same complexion with what you have already read, will you not hesitate for a moment in proceeding, since you have learned the opinion of the Court?"

Tone.—"I believe there is nothing in what remains for me to say which can give any offence. I mean to express my feelings and gratitude towards the Catholic body, in whose cause I was engaged."

General Loftus.—"That seems to have nothing to say to the charge against you, to which only you are to speak. If you have anything to offer in defence or extenuation of that charge, the Court will hear you; but they beg that you will confine yourself to that subject."

Tone.—"I shall, then, confine myself to some points relative to my connection with the French Army. Attached to no party in the French Republic, without interest, without money, without intrigue, the openness and integrity of my views raised me to a high and confidential rank in its armies. I obtained the confidence of the Executive Directory, the approbation of my generals, and, I venture to add, the esteem and affection of my brave comrades. When I review these circumstances I feel a secret and internal consolation which no reverse of fortune, no sentence in the power of this Court to inflict, can ever deprive me of, or weaken in any degree. Under the flag of the French Republic, I originally engaged, with a view to save and liberate my own country. For that purpose I have encountered the chances of war amongst strangers; for that purpose I have repeatedly braved the terrors of the ocean, covered, as I knew it to be, with the triumphant fleets of that power which it was my glory and my duty to oppose. I have sacrificed all my views in life; I have courted poverty; I have left a be-



loved wife unprotected, and children whom I adored, fatherless. After such sacrifices in a cause which I have always conscientiously considered as the cause of justice and freedom, it is no great effort at this day to add, 'the sacrifice of my life.'

"But I hear it said that this unfortunate country has been a prey to all sorts of horrors. I sincerely lament it. I beg, however, it may be remembered that I have been absent four years from Ireland. To me these sufferings can never be attributed. I designed, by fair and open war, to procure the separation of the two countries. For open war I was prepared; but if, instead of that, a system of private assassination has taken place, I repeat, while I deplore it, that it is not chargeable on me. Atrocities, it seems, have been committed on both sides. I do not less deplore them; I detest them from my heart; and to those who know my character and sentiments, I may safely appeal for the truth of this assertion. With them I need no justification.

"In a cause like this, success is everything. Success, in the eyes of the vulgar, fixes its merits. Washington succeeded, and Kosciuszko failed.

"After a combat nobly sustained, a combat which would have excited the respect and sympathy of a generous enemy, my fate was to become a prisoner. To the eternal disgrace of those who gave the order, I was brought hither in irons, like a felon. I mention this for the sake of others; for me, I am indifferent to it; I am aware of the fate which awaits me, and scorn equally the tone of complaint and that of supplication.

"As to the connection between this country and Great Britain, I repeat it, all that has been imputed to me, words, writings, and actions, I here deliberately avow. I have spoken and acted with reflection, and on principle, and am ready to meet the consequences. Whatever be the sentence of this Court, I am prepared for it. Its members will surely discharge their duty; I shall take care not to be wanting in mine."

This speech was pronounced in a tone so magnanimous, so full of noble and calm serenity, as seemed deeply and visibly to affect all its hearers, the members of the Court not excepted. A pause ensued of some continuance, and silence reigned in the hall, till interrupted by Tone himself, who inquired whether it was not usual to assign an interval between the sentence and execution? The Judge Advocate answered that the voices of the Court would be collected without delay, and

the result transmitted forthwith to the Lord-Lieutenant. If the prisoner, therefore, had any observations to make, now was the moment.

Tone.—"I wish to offer a few words relative to one single point—to the mode of punishment. In France our *émigrés*, who stand nearly in the same situation in which I suppose I now stand before you, are condemned to be shot. I ask that the Court should adjudge me the death of a soldier, and let me be shot by a platoon of grenadiers. I request this indulgence rather in consideration of the uniform which I wear—the uniform of a *Chef de Brigade* in the French army—than from any personal regard to myself. In order to evince my claim to this favour, I beg that the Court may take the trouble to peruse my commission and letters of service in the French army. It will appear from these papers that I have not received them as a mask to cover me, but that I have been long and *bonâ fide* an officer in the French service."

Judge Advocate.—"You must feel that the papers you allude to will serve as undeniable proofs against you."

Tone.—"Oh, I know it well. I have already admitted the facts, and I now admit the papers as full proofs of conviction."

The papers were then examined; they consisted of a brevet of *Chef de Brigade*, from the Directory, signed by the Minister of War; of a letter of service, granting him the rank of Adjutant-General; and of a passport.

General Loftus.—"In these papers you are designated as serving in the army of England."

Tone.—"I did serve in that army when it was commanded by Buonaparte, by Desaix, and by Kilmaine, who is, as I am, an Irishman. But I have served elsewhere."

General Loftus observed that the Court would undoubtedly submit to the Lord-Lieutenant the address which he had read to them, and also the subject of his last demand. In transmitting the address, he however took care to efface all that part of it which he would not allow to be read. Lord Cornwallis refused the last demand of the prisoner, and he was sentenced to die the death of a traitor, in forty-eight hours, on the 12th of November. This cruelty he had foreseen; for England, from the days of Llewellyn of Wales, and Wallace of Scotland, to those of Tone and Napoleon, has never shown mercy or generosity to a fallen enemy. He, then, in perfect coolness and self-possession, determined to execute



his purpose, and anticipate their sentence.

The sentence upon Tone, pronounced by a court-martial, was obviously illegal; and so every lawyer knew it to be. But the people looked on as if in stupor. The son of Tone has truly described the condition of Dublin at that moment:—

“No man dared to trust his next neighbour, nor one of the pale citizens to betray by look or word his feelings or sympathy. The terror which prevailed in Paris under the rule of the Jacobins, or in Rome during the proscriptions of Marius, Sylla, and the Triumviri, and under the reigns of Tiberius, Nero, Caligula, and Domitian, was never deeper or more universal than that of Ireland at this fatal and shameful period. It was, in short, the feeling which made the people, soon after, passively acquiesce in the Union, and in the extinction of their name as a nation. Of the numerous friends of my father, and of those who had shared in his political principles and career, some had perished on the scaffold, others rotted in dungeons, and the remainder dreaded, by the slightest mark of recognition, to be involved in his fate.”

But there was one friend of the gallant prisoner who was determined that the law of the land should at least be invoked, and one effort made to rescue this noble Irishman from the jaws of death. The friend was John Philpot Curran. He believed that by moving the Court of King's Bench to assert its jurisdiction some delay might be interposed—the French Government might threaten to retaliate upon some important prisoner of war; the case might thus become a political and not a criminal one, and in the end, either through threats of retaliation, or by an arrangement with the British Government, Tone might be saved.

On the next day, November 12th (the day fixed for his execution), the scene in the Court of King's Bench was awful and impressive to the highest degree. As soon as it opened, Curran advanced, leading the aged father of Tone, who produced his affidavit that his son had been brought before a bench of officers, calling itself a court-martial, and sentenced to death. “I do not pretend,” said Curran, “that Mr. Tone is not guilty of the charges of which he is accused. I presume the officers were honourable men. But it is stated in this affidavit, as a solemn fact, that Mr. Tone had no commission under His Majesty; and, therefore, no court-martial could have cognizance of any crime imputed to him whilst the Court of King's Bench sat in the capacity of the

great Criminal Court of the land. In times when war was raging, when man was opposed to man in the field, courts-martial might be endured; but every law authority is with me whilst I stand upon this sacred and immutable principle of the Constitution—that martial law and civil law are incompatible, and that the former must cease with the existence of the latter. This is not, however, the time for arguing this momentous question. My client must appear in this Court. He is cast for death this very day. He may be ordered for execution whilst I address you. I call on the Court to support the law, and move for a *habeas corpus*, to be directed to the Provost-Marshal of the barracks of Dublin and Major Sandys, to bring up the body of Tone.”

*Chief Justice*.—“Have a writ instantly prepared.”

*Curran*.—“My client may die whilst the writ is preparing.”

*Chief Justice*.—“Mr. Sheriff, proceed to the barracks and acquaint the Provost-Marshal that a writ is preparing to suspend Mr. Tone's execution, and see that he be not executed.”

The Court awaited, in a state of the utmost agitation and suspense, the return of the Sheriff. He speedily appeared, and said: “My lord, I have been to the barracks, in pursuance of your order. The Provost-Marshal says he must obey Major Sandys. Major Sandys says he must obey Lord Cornwallis.” Mr. Curran announced at the same time that Mr. Tone (the father) was just returned, after serving the *habeas corpus*, and that General Craig would not obey it. The Chief Justice exclaimed: “Mr. Sheriff, take the body of Tone into custody; take the Provost-Marshal and Major Sandys into custody, and show the order of the Court to General Craig.”

The general impression was now that the prisoner would be led out to execution, in defiance of the Court. This apprehension was legible in the countenance of Lord Kilwarden, a man who, in the worst of times, preserved a religious respect for the laws, and who, besides, I may add, felt every personal feeling of pity and respect for the prisoner, whom he had formerly contributed to shield from the vengeance of Government on an occasion almost as perilous. His agitation, according to the expression of an eye-witness, was magnificent.

The Sheriff returned at length with the fatal news. He had been refused admittance in the barracks; but was informed that Mr. Tone, who had wounded himself dangerously in the neck the night before,



was not in a condition to be removed. In short, on the night before, after writing a letter to the French Directory, and a touching adieu to his wife, while the soldiers were erecting a gibbet for him in the yard before his window, he cut his throat with a knife. But it was not effectually done, and he lingered in that dungeon, stretched on his bloody pallet, in the extremity of agony, seven days and nights. No friend was allowed access to him; and nobody saw him but the prison surgeon, a French emigrant, and therefore his natural enemy. At length he died.\*

The Government allowed the body to be carried away by a relative named Dunbavin, and it was buried in the little churchyard of Bodenstown, County Kildare, where Thomas Davis caused a monumental slab to be erected to his memory.

"Thus passed away," says Madden, "one of the master spirits of his time. The curse of Swift was upon this man—he was an Irishman. Had he been a native of any other European country, his noble qualities, his brilliant talents, would have raised him to the first honours in the state, and to the highest place in the esteem of his fellow-citizens. His name lives, however, and his memory is probably destined to survive as long as his country has a history. Peace be to his ashes!"

The expenses incurred in first exciting the insurrection, next in suppressing it, and afterwards in carrying out its real object—a Legislative Union, are estimated moderately by Dr. Madden, as follows:—

From 1797 to 1802, the cost of the large military force that was kept up in Ireland, estimated at £1,000,000 per annum,	£16,000,000
Purchase of the Irish Parliament,	1,500,000
Payment of claims of suffering loyalists,	1,500,000
Secret Service money, from 1797 to 1804 (from official reports),	53,547
Secret Service money, previous to August 21, 1797, date of first entry in preceding account—say from date of Jackson's mission in 1794, estimated at	20,000
Probable amount of pensions paid for services in suppression of the Rebellion and the promotion of the Union, to the present time,	1,200,000
Increased expense of legal proceedings and judicial tribunals,	500,000
Additional expenditure in public offices, consequent on increased duties in 1798, and alterations in establishments attendant on the Union, the removal of Parliamentary archives, and compensation of officers, servants, &c.,	800,000
Total,	£21,573,547

\* Madden states that one friend of Tone, a Mr. Fitzpatrick, of Capel Street, was admitted to see him once. This is a matter on which Tone's son, who was then far away, might easily have been misinformed. Madden further testifies that the surgeon, a Dr. Lentaigne, was a very good and humane man.

The whole of which was, the next year, in the arrangement of the terms of "Union," carried to the account of Ireland, and made part of *her* national debt—as if it were Ireland that profited by these transactions.

The military force in Ireland, during and immediately after the insurrection, was:—

FROM PARLIAMENTARY RETURNS.

The Regulars,	32,281
The Militia,	26,634
The Yeomanry,	51,274
The English Militia,	24,201
Artillery,	1,500
Commissariat,	1,700
Total,	137,590

These figures are taken from a report of the Parliamentary proceedings of the 18th of February, 1799. They are introduced in a speech of Lord Castlereagh, prefacing a motion on military estimates. He did not think that one man could be then spared of the 137,590,—though the rebellion was completely over, and though he had to deal with a population only *one-half* of the present. We have not at hand the means of ascertaining the force of 1800, but there is ground for concluding that it was over that of 1799, though the time of the rebellion was still further off by a year.

But, in fact, Ministers had in reserve still another ordeal which our country had to pass through—the *Union*; and this immense military force was still thought needful, "as good lookers-on"—to use Lord Strafford's phrase of a century and a half earlier.

## CHAPTER X.

1798—1799.

Examination of O'Connor, Emmet, and MacNeven—Lord Enniskillen and his Court-Martial—Project of Union—Bar Meeting—Speech from the Throne—Union Proposed—Reception in the Lords—In the Commons—Ponsonby—Fitzgerald—Sir Jonah Barrington—Castlereagh's Explanation—Speech of Plunket—First Division on the Union—Majority of One—Mr. Trench and Mr. Fox—Methods of Conversion to Unionism—First Contest a Drawn Battle—Excitement in Dublin.

PARLIAMENT continued sitting. In August and September, 1798, the examination of Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O'Connor, and Dr. MacNeven, proceeded before the secret committees. While the report of these examinations was still secret, the Dublin newspapers under the control of the Government published some very garbled and falsified accounts of them, calculated not only to criminate and de-



grade those gentlemen themselves, but to hold them forth as betraying their comrades and associates. The object of this was very plain. They thought it necessary to protest against it by a published card. Thereupon they were examined again; were asked whether they meant to retract anything; were shown the minutes of their evidence as taken down, and interrogated as to its correctness and fidelity. They answered that they found it correct, so far as it went; but Emmet declared that very much of their evidence was *omitted*. On the whole, they admitted that the report *shown to them* was substantially correct (except the omissions), and that they had only meant to protest against the false newspaper accounts. Their new examination was triumphantly paraded as a complete exculpation of the committees from all charge of garbling; but, in fact, the newspapers could not have come by even their partial and carefully distorted accounts of this evidence, except through some one connected with the Government or secret committees; and so the intended effect was in part produced without the Government seeming to be a party to it. This affair is obscure; but, in justice to the unfortunate gentlemen then in the hands of most unscrupulous enemies, it is right to throw all the light possible upon it. Arthur O'Connor, in a letter to Lord Castlereagh, gives this account of the misunderstanding:—

“At the instance of Government, Emmet, MacNeven, and I, drew up a memoir containing thirty-six pages, giving an account of the origin, principles, conduct, and views of the Union, which we signed and delivered to you on the 4th of August last. On the 6th, Mr. Cook came to our prison, and after acknowledging that the memoir was a perfect performance of our agreement, he told us that Lord Cornwallis had read it; but, as it was a vindication of the Union, and a condemnation of the Ministers, the Government, and Legislature of Ireland, he could not receive it; and, therefore, he wished we would alter it. We declared we would not change one letter—it was all true, and it was the truth we stood pledged to deliver. He then asked us, if Government should publish such parts only as might suit them, whether we would refrain from publishing the memoir entire. We answered that, having stipulated for the liberty of publication, we would use that right when and as we should feel ourselves called on. To which he added that, if we published, he would have to hire persons to answer us; that then he

supposed we would reply, by which a paper war would be carried on without end between us and the Government. Finding that we would not suffer the memoir to be garbled, and that the literary contest between us and these hirelings was not likely to turn out to your credit, it was determined to examine us before the secret committees, whereby a more complete selection might be made out of the memoir, and all the objectionable truths—with which it was observed it abounded—might be suppressed. For the present I shall only remark that, of one hundred pages, to which the whole of the information I gave to the Government and to the secret committees amounts, only one page has been published.”

On the 6th of October, Parliament was prorogued with a highly congratulatory speech from the Throne, on the suppression of the “dangerous and wicked rebellion,” and on the glorious victory obtained by “Sir Horatio Nelson over the French fleet in the Mediterranean.”

About the same time occurred a certain sham court-martial, under the presidency of the Earl of Enniskillen, a Colonel in the army—a great favourite with the Orangemen, and probably an Orangeman himself. A man named Wollaghan, a yeoman, had brutally shot a poor peaceable man in his own house. The affair is not otherwise deserving of notice than that the evidence on this trial shows the horrid state of the country. A corporal of the corps deposed that a certain Captain Armstrong, who commanded at Mount Kennedy before and after the murder, had given orders “that any body of yeomanry going out (he would not wish them less than nine or ten for their own safety), and if they should meet with any rebels, whom they knew or suspected to be such, they need not be at the trouble of bringing them in, but were to shoot them on the spot; that he (the witness) communicated this to the corps, and is very certain in the hearing of the prisoner Wollaghan, who was a sober, faithful, and loyal yeoman, and not degrading the rest of the corps—one of the best in it; that it was the practice of the corps to go out upon scouring parties without orders,” &c.

The affair, however, made a noise—became notorious; and Lord Cornwallis thought himself obliged to disapprove the judgment of the court-martial (which acquitted Wollaghan), and to rebuke Lord Enniskillen. The murderer, however, was only dismissed the service. The Orangemen were highly disgusted with Lord Cornwallis, and called him “Croppy



Corny." But the cases of local tyranny and brutality exercised upon the people were very seldom indeed brought into any court. Seldom still were they punished. The jurymen who should have ventured to hesitate about acquitting an Orangeman would have been himself hunted down as a "croppy." The moment was come to propose the *Union*, as the only way of putting a stop to these horrors and to all the other woes of Ireland.

Even before the fury of rebellion had subsided, had the British Ministry recommended preparatory steps to enable the Irish Government to introduce the proposal of a Legislative Union with plausibility and effect upon the first favourable opening. In pursuance of this recommendation a pamphlet was written, or procured to be written, by Mr. Edward Cooke, the Under-Secretary of the Civil Department. It was published anonymously, but was well understood to speak the sentiments of the British Administration, and the Chief Governor, and those of the Irish Administration who went with his Excellency upon the question of union. It was circulated with incredible industry and profusion throughout every part of the nation, and certainly was productive of many conversations on the question under the then existing circumstances of that nation; the most prominent of which were,—the still unallayed horrors of blood and carnage, the excessive cruelty and vindictive ferocity of the Irish yeomanry towards their countrymen, compared with the pacific, orderly, and humane conduct of the English militia, of which about eighteen regiments were still in the country, and, above all, the confidence which the conciliatory conduct of the Chief Governor inspired. This pamphlet was considered as a kind of official proclamation of the sentiments of Government upon the question, and had no sooner appeared than it produced a general warfare of the press, and threw the whole nation into a new division of parties.

No sooner was the intention of Government unequivocally known, than most of the leading characters took their ranks according to their respective views and sentiments,—the Earl of Clare at the head of the Unionists, and the Right Honourable Mr. Foster, his late zealous colleague in the extorted system of coercion and terror, put himself at the head of the Anti-Unionists. Amongst the first dismissals for opposing the Union were those of Sir John Parnell, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Fitzgerald, the

Prime-Sergeant. The most interesting public meeting upon the subject of the Union was that of the gentlemen of the Irish bar. It has before been observed, that in Ireland the bar was the great road that led to preferment, and few were the families in the nation which looked up to it that did not furnish one member or more to that profession. The bar, consequently, commanded a very powerful influence over the public mind, even independently of the weight of respectability attending the opinions of that learned body. In pursuance of a requisition signed by twenty-seven lawyers of the first respectability and character in the profession, a meeting of the Irish bar took place on the 9th of December, at the Exhibition House in William Street, to deliberate on the question of Legislative Union. The meeting was very numerous.

It must be observed that the bar of Ireland was the only great body in the state or in society that Lords Clare and Castlereagh feared, as a serious obstruction to their plans. In its ranks were the most accomplished statesmen and most formidable debaters of the country; and the most earnest opponents of Union to the last were barristers. Lord Clare, therefore, had taken measures to corrupt the bar by creating a great many new legal offices, which they were expected to solicit, and for which they would sell themselves to the Castle. He doubled the number of the Bankrupt Commissioners; he revived some offices, created others; and, under pretence of furnishing each county with a local judge, in two months he established thirty-two new offices of about six or seven hundred pounds per annum each. His arrogance in court intimidated many whom his patronage could not corrupt; and he had no doubt of overpowering the whole profession.

There was much interest, therefore, felt in the result of this preliminary meeting of the bar. Among those who had called the meeting were fourteen of the King's counsel: E. Mayne, W. Saurin, W. C. Plunket, C. Bushe, W. Sankey, B. Burton, J. Barrington, A. M'Cartney, G. O'Farrell, J. O'Driscoll, J. Lloyd, P. Burrowes, R. Jebb, and H. Joy, Esquires—a very distinguished list of names; some of which will be met with again and again, before the final catastrophe of the nation. Saurin spoke against the Union project. "He was a moderate Huguenot," says Sir Jonah Barrington, "and grandson of the great preacher at the Hague—an excellent lawyer and a steadfast and pious Christian." Sir Jonah goes on to describe this important meeting:—



"Mr. Saint George Daly, a briefless barrister, was the first supporter of the Union. Of all men he was the least thought of for preferment; but it was wittily observed, 'that the Union was the first brief Mr. Daly had spoken from.' He moved an adjournment.

"Mr. Thomas Grady was the Fitzgibbon spokesman—a gentleman of independent property, a tolerable lawyer, an amatory poet, a severe satirist, and an indefatigable quality-hunter. He had written the *Flesh Brush*, for Lady Clare; the *West Briton*, for the Union; the *Barrister*, for the bar; and the *Nosegay*, for a banker at Limerick—who sued him successfully for a libel.

"'The Irish,' said Mr. Grady, 'are only the *rump of an aristocracy*. Shall I visit posterity with a system of *war, pestilence, and famine?*' \* No, no! give me a Union. Unite me to that country where all is peace, and order, and prosperity. Without a Union we shall see embryo chief judges, attorney-generals in perspective, and *animalcula sergeants*. All the cities of the south and west are on the *Atlantic Ocean*, between the rest of the world and Great Britain; they are all for it—they must all become warehouses; the people are Catholics, and they are all for it,' &c., &c., &c. Such an oration as Mr. Grady's had never before been heard at a meeting of lawyers in Europe.

"Mr. John Beresford, Lord Clare's nephew and purse-bearer, followed, as if for the charitable purpose of taking the laugh from Mr. Grady, in which he perfectly succeeded, by turning it on himself. Mr. Beresford afterwards became a parson, and is now Lord Decies.

"Mr. Goold said: 'There are forty thousand British troops in Ireland, and with forty thousand bayonets at my breast the Minister shall not plant another Sicily in the bosom of the Atlantic. I want not the assistance of divine inspiration to foretell, for I am enabled by the visible and unerring demonstrations of nature to assert, that Ireland was destined to be a free and independent nation. Our patent to be a state, not a shire, comes direct from heaven. The Almighty has, in majestic characters, signed the great charter of our independence. The great Creator of the world has

\* Nothing could be more unfortunate than this crude observation of Mr. Grady, as the very three evils—war, pestilence, and famine—which he declared a union would avert, have since visited, and are still visiting, the unioned country; which has, since the connection with England, been depopulated by the *famine* which that Union caused; and, inoculated with the late plague from Great Britain, they are now declared in a state of *war* by the British Legislature.

given our beloved country the gigantic outlines of a kingdom. The God of nature never intended that Ireland should be a province, and, *by G—, she never shall!*'

"The assembly burst into a tumult of applause. A repetition of the words came from many mouths, and many an able lawyer swore hard upon the subject. The division was—

Against the Union,	. . . . .	166
In favour of it,	. . . . .	32
Majority,	. . . . .	134

"Thirty-two," continues Sir Jonah Barrington, "was the precise number of the county judges, and of this minority the following persons were afterwards rewarded for their adherence to Lord Clare:—

*"List of Barristers who Supported the Union, and their Respective Rewards."*

	Per Annum.
1. Charles Osborn, appointed a Judge of the King's Bench,	£3,300
2. Saint John Daly, appointed a Judge of the King's Bench,	3,300
3. William Smith, appointed Baron of the Exchequer,	3,300
4. Mr. McClelland, appointed Baron of the Exchequer,	3,300
5. Robert Johnson, appointed Judge of the Common Pleas,	3,300
6. William Johnson, appointed Judge of the Common Pleas,	3,300
7. Mr. Torrens, appointed Judge of the Common Pleas,	3,300
8. Mr. Vandeleur, appointed a Judge of the King's Bench,	3,300
9. Thomas Maunsell, a County Judge,	600
10. William Turner, a County Judge,	600
11. John Scholes, a County Judge,	600
12. Thomas Vickers, a County Judge,	600
13. J. Homan, a County Judge,	600
14. Thomas Grady, a County Judge,	600
15. John Dwyer, a County Judge,	600
16. George Leslie, a County Judge,	600
17. Thomas Scott, a County Judge,	600
18. Henry Brook, a County Judge,	600
19. James Geraghty, a County Judge,	600
20. Richard Sharkey, a County Judge,	600
21. William Stokes, a County Judge,	600
22. William Roper, a County Judge,	600
23. C. Garnet, a County Judge,	600
24. Mr. Jenison, a Commissioner for the distribution of one million and a half Union compensation,	1,200
25. Mr. Fitzgibbon Henchy, Commissioner of Bankrupts,	400
26. J. Keller, Officer in the Court of Chancery,	500
27. P. W. Fortescue, M.P., a secret pension,	400
28. W. Longfield, an officer in the Custom House,	500
29. Arthur Brown, Commission of Inspector,	800
30. Edmund Stanley, Commission of Inspector,	800
31. Charles Ormsby, Counsel to Commissioners, Value,	5,000
32. William Knott, M.P., Commission of Appeals,	800
33. Henry Deane Grady, Counsel to Commissioners, Value,	5,000
34. John Beresford, his father a title."	

It was already so notorious, during this winter, that a Union was to be imme-



diately proposed, that the measure was already warmly discussed, in anticipation of the approaching meeting of Parliament. Mr. Cooke's pamphlet called forth scores of other pamphlets, for and against. Before the end of December, no less than thirty appeared, of which Plowden records the titles.

The city of Dublin, which it was natural to suppose would be more prejudiced by the Union than any other part of the kingdom, inasmuch as it would lose much of the advantages of a metropolis by the abolition of the Parliament, was also prominently forward in its opposition to that measure. A post-assembly of the Lord Mayor, sheriffs, commons, and citizens of the city of Dublin was convened on the 17th of December; who, referring to a variety of rumours that were then in circulation, of an intended union of Ireland with Great Britain, came to resolutions strongly denouncing any such project; which certainly, whatever it might be supposed to do for other parts of the kingdom, was sure to ruin Dublin at all events.

Next came a very numerous and respectable meeting of the merchants and bankers of the city, who resolved—"That they looked with abhorrence on any attempt to deprive the people of Ireland of their Parliament, and thereby of their constitutional right, and immediate power to legislate for themselves. That, impressed with every sentiment of loyalty to their King, and affectionate attachment to British connection, they conceived that to agitate in Parliament a question of the Legislative Union between that kingdom and Great Britain would be highly dangerous and impolitic."

Even the fellows and scholars of Trinity College held their meeting, and passed a resolution calling on their representatives in Parliament to oppose the Union. Similar resolutions of county and borough meetings appeared nearly every day; so that when Lord Cornwallis, on the 22d of January, 1799, came down, along with his trusty counsellors, Lords Clare and Castle-reagh, to open the session of Parliament, it was very evident that there was a considerable mass of opposition to be broken down.

On that day there was a great concourse in Dublin streets, and College Green was filled with anxious multitudes, not gay and jubilant as they had been when once before they had crowded those avenues to witness the parade of the volunteers, but with a gloomy feeling of the miseries then actually upon the country, and foreboding of something worse to come. The

Viceroy came from the Castle to the House with a strong guard, and duly delivered his speech from the throne; of which these two portentous paragraphs were listened to with breathless attention:—

"The zeal of His Majesty's regular and militia forces, the gallantry of the yeomanry, the honourable co-operation of the British fencibles and militia, and the activity, skill, and valour of His Majesty's fleets, will, I doubt not, defeat every future effort of the enemy. But the more I have reflected on the situation and circumstances of this kingdom, considering on the one hand the strength and stability of Great Britain, and on the other those divisions which have shaken Ireland to its foundations, the more anxious I am for some permanent adjustment which may extend the advantages enjoyed by our sister kingdom to every part of this island.

"The unremitting industry with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of endeavouring to effect a separation of this kingdom from Great Britain, must have engaged your particular attention, and His Majesty commands me to express his anxious hope that this consideration, joined to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest, may dispose the Parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the most effectual means of maintaining and improving a connection essential to their common security, and of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm and lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire."

Here, then, was the dreaded *Union* distinctly enough raised up before Parliament and the country, and avowed as the policy of the Administration. At once began the tumult of debate on the address. In the Lords, an address was proposed which was almost an echo of the speech, promising to "give the fullest attention to measures of such importance."

Upon which it was proposed by Lord Powerscourt to amend the said motion, by inserting after the word importance the following words:—"That it is our most earnest desire to strengthen the connection between the two countries by every possible means, but the measure of a Legislative Union we apprehend is not within the limit of our power; we beg leave, also, to represent to your Majesty that, although this House were competent to adopt such a measure, we conceive that it would be highly impolitic so to do, as it would tend, in our opinion, more than any other cause, ultimately to a separation of this kingdom from that of Great Britain."



A motion was then made for leave to withdraw the amendment. A debate arose thereupon, and the question being put, the House divided, and the Earl of Glandore reported that the contents below the bar were nineteen, and the non-contents in the House were forty-six.

A motion was then made that after the word "security," in the same paragraph, the following words be expunged, "and of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm and lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire," which also passed in the negative. Another motion was then made by the Earl of Bellamont, that after the said word "importance" the following words be inserted: "So far as may be consistent with the permanent enjoyment, exercise, and tutelary vigilance, of our resident and independent Parliament, as established, acknowledged, and recognized." This motion was also negatived by a division of forty-nine against sixteen. Fourteen of the lords in the minority protested.\*

In the House of Commons were many anxious faces and gloomy brows. It had already been sufficiently indicated that Government, to carry this measure, would stop at nothing. Immediately after the bar meeting the Right Honourable James Fitzgerald, Prime-Sergeant, was dismissed from office, and deprived of his precedence at the bar. It was known, also, that unlimited funds would be used by Government, without scruple, both in buying up boroughs (which were then treated as the private property of their patrons), and in direct bribery to pay for votes. The innumerable methods which a powerful government has at its disposal both to reward and to punish, all these considerations rose up before the anxious minds of the members occupying those benches. It must be confessed, too, that the previous history of the Irish Parliament, as recorded in these pages, was not calculated to make the country expect any exhibition of stern patriotism. "I have now seen," said Theobald Wolfe Tone, "the Parliament of Ireland, the Parliament of England, the Congress of the United States of America, the Corps Legislatif of France, and the Convention of Batavia; I have likewise seen our shabby Volunteer Convention in 1783, and the General Committee of the Cath-

olics in 1793, so that I have seen, in the way of deliberate bodies, as many I believe as most men, and of all those I have mentioned, beyond all comparison, the most shamelessly profligate and abandoned by all sense of virtue, principle, or even common decency, was the Legislature of my own unfortunate country—the scoundrels!"

But when we read so harsh a judgment upon the Legislature of our country, it must not be forgotten that it did not represent the country, did not even represent the Protestant minority of the country, represented nothing (as to its vast majority) save a few noble families, great proprietors, and the enormous "interest" of place and pension. Considering all this, it is rather surprising, and was indeed very surprising to Lord Castlereagh, that on the present vital occasion the policy of the Castle met with so hearty an opposition.

The address in the Commons was moved by Lord Tyrone, eldest son of the Marquis of Waterford. The address, he said, did not pledge him in any manner to support the measure of an union; let that question of policy stand upon its own merits, let it be adopted or rejected as the interests of Ireland and the prosperity of the empire should dictate.

Colonel Fitzgerald (member for the County of Cork) seconded the address, expressing a zealous desire that any step likely to cement and strengthen the connection between the two countries should be adopted.

After several speeches opposing the measure of an union in a vague and hypothetical sort of way, as if there were really no such question before the House, Lord Castlereagh, whose fault was certainly not lack of boldness, rose to say that although there were not in the address any specific pledge to a measure of union, yet it was clearly implied in the wish to strengthen the resources of the empire; for he had no difficulty in saying that he thought the only means of settling that unhappy country in permanent tranquillity and connection with Britain were to be found in a Legislative Union, and on that subject he did intend, at an early day, to submit a specific motion to the House.\*

Mr. G. Ponsonby entered on an able attack and exposure of the general prin-

\* Viz., Leinster.      Kilkenny.  
 Granard.            Belmore.  
 Belvidere.          Powerscourt.  
 Arran.                De Vesci.  
 Charlemont.        Dunsany.  
 Bellamont.          Lismore.  
 Mountcashel.      Wm. Down and Connor.

\* On occasion of this first and most remarkable of the debates on the Union it has been judged expedient to go somewhat further into detail than usual. It was now that Members of Parliament took their positions on that great question, from which positions many of them afterwards retreated and changed sides, from motives, unhappily, too well known, as will soon appear.



ciple of an union, by boldly avowing the principle that neither the Legislature nor any power on earth had a right or authority to annihilate the Irish Parliament, and deprive people for ever of their rights to the benefits of the Constitution and civil liberty.

The Minister had told them they ought to discuss this measure with coolness; but when the Minister himself would not leave men to the free exercise of their understanding, but turned out of office the best and oldest servants of the Crown, because they would not prostitute their conscience; when the terror of dismissal was thus holden out to deter men in office from a fair exercise of their private judgment, how could he talk of cool discussion? He concluded by moving an amendment, which would give every gentleman, who did not wish to pledge himself to a surrender of the rights of the country, an opportunity of speaking his mind. The amendment was,—that after the passage which declared the willingness of the House to enter on a consideration of what measures might best tend to confirm the common strength of the empire, should be inserted, “maintaining, however, the undoubted birth-right of the people of Ireland to have a resident and independent legislature, such as was recognized by the British Legislature in 1782, and was finally settled at the adjustment of all differences between the two countries.”

Sir L. Parsons seconded the amendment.

Many gentlemen warmly supported Ponsonby's amendment; amongst others, Mr. Fitzgerald, ex-Prime-Sergeant, who raised the vital Constitutional question,—“It was not, in his opinion, within the moral competence of Parliament to destroy and extinguish itself, and with it the rights and liberties of those who created it. The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who derive any serious interest under their engagements; such a compact may, with respect to Great Britain, be an union; but with respect to Ireland, it will be a revolution, and a revolution of a most alarming nature.”

Mr. Fitzgerald also quoted Dr. Johnson's remark to an Irishman, on the subject of an union: “Don't unite with us,” said he, “we shall unite with you only to rob you; we should have robbed the Scots if they had anything to be robbed of.”

The debate proceeded, warming as it went. Sir Boyle Roche, in his blunder-

ing way, stumbled upon a most accurate description of the real Castle policy. He said “he was for an union to put an end to uniting between Presbyterians, Protestants, and Catholics, to overturn the Constitution.”

One of the most patriotic speeches made in the course of this historic argument was by Sir Jonah Barrington, then a Judge of the Admiralty Court. He strongly deprecated this plan to subject irrevocably one independent country to the will of another, and both to the will of a Minister already stronger than the Crown, and more powerful than the people; and this great and important usurpation, stolen into Parliament through the fulsome paragraphs of an echoing congratulation, pledging the House to the discussion of a principle subversive of their liberties, and in the hour of convalescence calling on it to commit suicide. Ireland (he said) had not fair play: her Parliament had not fair play. The foulest and most unconstitutional means, he believed, had been used to intimidate and corrupt it, and either to force or to seduce a suffrage, when nothing but general, independent, uninfluenced opinion could warrant for a moment the most distant view of so ruinous a subject. He had good reason to believe that corrupt and unconstitutional means had been used by the noble lord to individuals of the Irish Parliament. Some of those means were open and avowed. Two of the oldest, most respectable, and most beloved officers of the Crown had been displaced, because they presumed to hint an opinion adverse to the stripling's dictates, on a subject where their country was at stake; their removals crowned them with glory, and the Minister with contempt. He asserted that other gentlemen in office, whose opinions were decidedly adverse to the measure, but whose circumstances could not bear similar sacrifices, were dragged to the altar of pollution, and forced against their will to vote against their country. He had good reason to believe that unconstitutional interference had been used by the executive power with the legislative body. One gentleman refused the instructions of his constituents, and had been promoted. Peerages (as was rumoured) were bartered for the rights of minors, and every effort used to destroy the free agency of Parliament. If this were true, it encroached on the constitution; and if the executive power overstepped its bounds, the people were warranted to do the same on their part; and between both it might be annihilated,



and leave a wondering world in amazement how the same people could have been wise enough to frame the best constitution on earth, and foolish enough to destroy it. One king and two kingdoms was the cry of the people of Ireland.

Sir John Blaquiére, on the side of the Government, remonstrated against "the charges of undue influence and corruption;" and then proceeded to use an argument in behalf of the Union, which may serve as a sample of the means by which so many of the Catholics were induced to favour that measure. Sir John said, "the honourable member who proposed the amendment, with a flow of such transcendent eloquence as had seldom been heard in that House, had expressly stated that the Roman Catholics must oppose the Union. He knew not the mind of Catholics upon the subject; but he should speak his own, that the Roman Catholics under the present order of things *could never be accommodated, as he feared, with what they asked*, without imminent danger to the Protestant establishment, both in Church and State; but *if once an union should be adopted, all those difficulties would vanish, and he should see none in granting them everything they desired.*"

Mr. Knox and Mr. Hans Hamilton made violent attacks upon the Union and upon the Government.

Mr. Knox (member for Philipstown) lamented that that accursed measure had long been the favourite object of that Minister of England, whose wild ambition had already led to the destruction of empires, and which then sought to annihilate that nation. In order to forward that wicked scheme, great pains had been taken by those who managed the affairs of Government under his guidance, to promote and keep alive among the people every distinction of party and religion; all differences of opinion, whether in politics or religion, had been industriously fomented and encouraged, and every means taken to distract and divide the inhabitants of that land. If that fatal measure should ever be carried, henceforth that insulted, degraded, debased country would be made a barrack, a dépôt from whence to draw the means of enslaving Great Britain, and no resource left to save either country but a revolution.

Mr. Hans Hamilton declared that an union was a measure he should very firmly oppose within those walls with his vote, without them with his life. But he foresaw that the hour was at hand which would prove this to be the most glorious

day that Ireland had ever beheld, and enable the members to go forth to their constituents, and assure them they were represented by an Irish Parliament, and never would betray their independence.

Lord Castlereagh felt that the day was going against him. He rose to state his reasons for favouring the measure of a Legislative Union, and spoke, as he well knew how, with a noble air of candour. It is almost incredible, however, that in the abstract of his speech which has come down to us, actually appear the following words:—

"His lordship trusted that no man would decide on a measure of such importance as that in part before the House, *on private or personal motives*; for if a decision were thus to be influenced, it would be the most unfortunate that could ever affect the country."

His reasons for supporting the measure were of course of the purest description. If the means he used to support it had been as free from taint as his personal conduct, his lordship's name and fame would now be much higher than they are. "Dissensions" and "divisions" unhappily existing in Ireland (which Mr. Knox said the Government had "industriously fomented"), formed the chief motive, in his mind, for our country to fling itself into the arms of the English, who had carefully created and kept alive those dissensions and divisions in Ireland for centuries! One passage in his lordship's argument reads strangely in the light of subsequent history:—

"Absentees (he said) formed another objection. They would be somewhat increased, no doubt, by an union; but the evil would be compensated by other advantages, and among them by the growth of *an intermediate class of men between the landlord and the peasant; a class of men whose loss was felt in Ireland, to train the mind of the lower class*. These an union would bring over from England. They would also have *capital from thence*. At all events, these inconveniences would be but a grain of sand compared with the advantages which would be derived from internal security, and their growing together in habits of amity and affection."

The next powerful speech on the debate was that of William Conyngham Plunket, then in the prime of life. He had been the warm friend of Tone and of Emmet, and was now fast rising into high eminence, both as a barrister and a member of Parliament. It is his famous *Hamilcar* speech in which he assails the Government, as he had promised to do, more daringly



than Sir Jonah Barrington. He spoke of the apparently bluff, downright old soldier (Cornwallis) "who, as an additional evidence of the directness and purity of his views, had chosen for his secretary a simple and modest youth (*Puer ingenui vultus ingenuique pudoris*), whose inexperience was the voucher of his innocence; yet, was he bold to say, that during the Vice-royalty of that unspotted veteran, and during the administration of that unassuming stripling, within the last six weeks, a system of black corruption had been carried on within the walls of the Castle, which would disgrace the annals of the worst period of the history of either country. Did they choose to take down his words? He needed to call no witnesses to their bar to prove them. He saw two right honourable gentlemen sitting within those walls who had long and faithfully served the Crown, and who had been dismissed, because they dared to express a sentiment in favour of the freedom of their country. He saw another honourable gentleman who had been forced to resign his place as Commissioner of the Revenue, because he refused to co-operate in that dirty job of a dirty Administration. Did they dare to deny this? I say," he continued, "that at this moment the threat of dismissal from office is suspended over the heads of the members who now sit around me, in order to influence their votes on the question of this night, involving everything that can be sacred or dear to man. Do you desire to take down my words? Utter the desire, and I will prove the truth of them at your bar. Sir, I would warn you against the consequences of carrying this measure by such means as this, but that I see the necessary defeat of it in the honest and universal indignation which the adoption of such means excites; I see the protection against the wickedness of the plan in the imbecility of its execution, and I congratulate my country that, when a design was formed against their liberties, the prosecution of it was entrusted to such hands as it is now placed in."

Mr. Plunket then dealt with the Constitutional grounds of opposition to an union, and especially to the *time* of its being proposed. It is impossible, within our limits, to give more than a mere abstract of such a speech:—

"At a moment," he said, "when Ireland was filled with British troops, when the loyal men were fatigued and exhausted by their efforts to subdue rebellion—efforts in which they had succeeded before those troops arrived; whilst their *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, whilst

trials by court-martial were carrying on in many parts of the kingdom, whilst the people were taught to think that they had no right to meet or to deliberate, and whilst the great body of them were so palsied by their fears and worn down by their exertions that even the vital question was scarcely able to rouse them from their lethargy; at a moment when they were distracted by domestic dissensions—dissensions artfully kept alive, as the pretext for their present subjugation and the instrument of their future thralldom. He thanked Administration for the measure. They were, without intending it, putting an end to Irish dissensions. Through that black cloud, which they had collected over them, he saw the light breaking in upon their unfortunate country. They had composed dissensions, not by fomenting the embers of a lingering and subdued rebellion; not by hallooing the Protestant against the Catholic, and the Catholic against the Protestant; not by committing the North against the South; not by inconsistent appeals to local or party prejudices. No! but by the avowal of that atrocious conspiracy against the liberties of Ireland they had subdued every petty feeling and subordinate distinction. They had united every rank and description of men by the pressure of that grand and momentous subject; and he told them that they would see every honest and independent man in Ireland rally round her Constitution, and merge every other consideration in his opposition to that ungenerous and odious measure. For his own part he would resist it to the last gasp of his existence, and with the last drop of his blood; and when he felt the hour of his dissolution approaching, he would, like the father of Hannibal, take his children to the altar, and swear them to eternal hostility against the invaders of their country's freedom."

This gallant speech was often cited afterwards against Plunket; and it was remarked that Hamilcar, after that swearing scene, never helped the Romans to govern Carthage as a province.

Strange to say, of all the Beresfords, John Claudius Beresford, of the Riding-House and the pitch-caps, opposed the Government measure, and supported Mr. Ponsonby's amendment. Some of the strongest Irish nationalists of that day were Orangemen, and bitter persecutors of Catholics.

At length, after twenty-two hours' debate, at ten o'clock on the morning of the 24th, the House divided, and the vote stood—for Mr. Ponsonby's amendment,



105; against it, 106. Majority for the Government, 1.

It was held by both sides of the House to be substantially a defeat for the Government, and the multitudes who had been thronging the corridors, the porticos, and the streets all around, burst into acclamations of joy. The mob waited for members as they came out, and hooted or cheered, as they heard each member had voted for the Castle or the Nation.

As to the method by which Castlereagh had gained even that apparent and most unsatisfactory victory, Sir Jonah Barrington, an eye-witness, gives us this detail, which illustrates the whole mode and machinery whereby the Union was finally carried:—

“A very remarkable incident,” says Sir Jonah, “during the first night’s debate, occurred in the conduct of Mr Luke Fox and Mr. Trench, of Woodlawn, afterwards created Lord Ashtown. These were the most palpable, undisguised acts of public tergiversation and seduction ever exhibited in a popular assembly. They afterwards became the subject of many speeches and of many publications; and their consequences turned the majority of one in favour of the Minister.

“It was suspected that Mr. Trench had been long in negotiation with Lord Castlereagh; but it did not, in the early part of that night, appear to have been brought to any conclusion—his conditions were *supposed* to be too extravagant. Mr. Trench, after some preliminary observations, declared, in a speech, that he would vote against the Minister, and support Mr. Ponsonby’s amendment. This appeared a stunning blow to Mr. Cooke, who had been previously in conversation with Mr. Trench. He was immediately observed sidling from his seat nearer to Lord Castlereagh. They whispered earnestly, and, as if restless and undecided, both looked wistfully towards Mr. Trench. At length the matter seemed to be determined on. Mr. Cooke retired to a back seat, and was obviously endeavouring to count the House, probably to guess if they could that night dispense with Mr. Trench’s services. He returned to Lord Castlereagh—they whispered, again looked most affectionately at Mr. Trench, who seemed unconscious that he was the subject of their consideration. But there was no time to lose—the question was approaching—all shame was banished—they decided on the terms; and a significant and certain glance, obvious to everybody, convinced Mr. Trench that his conditions were agreed to. Mr. Cooke then went and sat down by his side; an earnest but very

short conversation took place; a parting smile completely told the House that Mr. Trench was that moment satisfied. These surmises were soon verified. Mr. Cooke went back to Lord Castlereagh; a congratulatory nod announced his satisfaction. But could any man for one moment suppose that a member of Parliament, a man of very large fortune, of respectable family, and good character, could be publicly, and without shame or compunction, actually seduced by Lord Castlereagh in the very body of the House, and under the eye of two hundred and twenty gentlemen? Yet this was the fact. In a few minutes Mr. Trench rose, to apologize for having indiscreetly declared he would support the amendment. He added, that he had thought better of the subject since he had *unguardedly* expressed himself; that he had been *convinced* he was wrong, and would support the Minister.

“Scarcely was there a member of any party who was not disgusted. It had, however, the effect intended by the desperate purchaser, of proving that ministers would stop at *nothing* to effect their objects, however shameless or corrupt. This purchase of Mr. Trench had a much more fatal effect upon the destinies of Ireland. His change of sides, and the majority of *one* to which it contributed, were probably the remote causes of persevering in an Union. Mr. Trench’s venality excited indignation in every friend of Ireland.\*

“Another circumstance, that night, proved by what means Lord Castlereagh’s majority of even *one* was acquired.

“The Place Bill, so long and so pertinaciously sought for, and so indiscreetly framed by Mr. Grattan and the Whigs of Ireland, now, for the first time, proved the very engine by which the Minister upset the opposition, and annihilated the Constitution.

“That bill enacted, that members accepting offices, places, or pensions, during the pleasure of the Crown, should not sit in Parliament unless re-elected; but, unfortunately, the bill made no distinction between valuable offices which might influence, and nominal offices which might job; and the Chiltern Hundreds of England were, under the title of the Escheatorships of Munster, Leinster, Connaught, &c., transferred to Ireland, with salaries of forty shillings, to be used at pleasure by the Secretary. Occasional and temporary seats were thus bartered for by Government, and, by the ensuing session,

\* No fewer than three Trenches are found in the “Black List,” as voting for the Union. They were all appointed to valuable offices for it, and one was made a peer and an ambassador.



made the complete and fatal instrument of packing the Parliament, and effecting an union.

"Mr. Luke Fox, a barrister of very humble origin, of vulgar manners, and of a coarse, harsh appearance, was endued with a clear, strong, and acute mind, and was possessed of much cunning. He had acquired very considerable legal information, and was an obstinate and persevering advocate. He had been the usher of a school, and a sizer in Dublin University; but neither politics nor the *belles-lettres* were his pursuit. On acquiring eminence at the bar he married an obscure niece of the Earl of Ely's. He had originally professed what was called Whiggism, merely, as people supposed, because his name was Fox. His progress was impeded by no political principles; but he kept his own secrets well, and, being a man of no importance, it was perfectly indifferent to everybody what side he took. Lord Ely, perceiving he was manageable, returned him to Parliament as one of his automata; and Mr. Fox played his part very much to the satisfaction of his manager.

"When the Union was announced, Lord Ely had not made his terms, and remained long in abeyance; \* and, as his lordship had not issued his orders to Mr. Fox, he was very unwilling to commit himself until he could dive deeper into probabilities; but rather believing the Opposition would have the majority, he remained in the body of the House, with the Anti-Unionists, when the division took place. The doors were scarcely locked when he became alarmed, and slunk, unperceived, into one of the dark corridors, where he concealed himself. He was, however, discovered, and the Sergeant-at-Arms was ordered to bring him forth, to be counted amongst the Anti-Unionists. His confusion was very great, and he seemed at his wit's end. At length he declared he had taken advantage of the Place Bill, had *actually accepted the Escheatorship of Munster*, and had thereby vacated his seat, and could not vote.

"The fact was doubted; but after much discussion, his excuse, *upon his honour*, was admitted, and he was allowed to return into the corridor. On the numbers being counted, there was a majority of ONE for Lord Castlereagh, and exclusive of Mr. Trench's conduct; but for that of Mr. Fox the numbers would have been equal. The measure would have been negatived by the Speaker's vote, and, the

\* He "made his terms," however, in due time. We afterwards find him in receipt of a sum of £45,000, the price of his three boroughs, which he sold to Government, that it might put its own creatures into the representation.

renewal of it the next day would have been prevented. This would have been a most important victory.

"The mischief of the Place Bill now stared its framers in the face, and gave the Secretary a code of instruction how to arrange a Parliament against the ensuing session.

"To render the circumstance still more extraordinary and unfortunate for Mr. Fox's reputation, it was subsequently discovered by the public records that Mr. Fox's assertion was false. But the following day Lord Castlereagh purchased him outright; and then, *and not before*, appointed him to the nominal office of Escheator of Munster, and left the seat of Lord Ely for another of his creatures.\* This is mentioned not only as one of the most reprehensible public acts committed during the discussion, but because it was the primary cause of the measure being persisted in."

Thus the preliminary contest on the very threshold of the Union question may be said to have ended in a drawn battle. It was known, however, that it was to be renewed on that very evening. It was an exciting day for the people of Dublin; and to those who know into what a dismal condition the Union has since dragged down the once proud metropolis of our island, there is something pathetic in the passionate anxiety with which its thronging people then crowded round their Parliament House, hanging on the momentous vote, watching with beating hearts the progress of a struggle which was to decide the destinies of their city and their nation.

## CHAPTER XI.

1799.

Second Debate on Union—Sir Lawrence Parsons—Mr. Smith—Ponsonby and Plunket—Division—Majority against Government—Ponsonby's Resolution for Perpetual Independence—Defection of Fortescue and others—Resolution Lost—"Possible Circumstances"—Tumult—Danger of Lord Clare—Second Debate in the Lords—Lord Clare triumphant—"Loyalists' Claim Bill"—"Rebels Disqualification Bill"—"Flogging Fitzgerald"—Asks Indemnity—Regency Act—Opposed by Castlereagh.

It was naturally supposed that if the Minister was left in a minority on the

\* This did not conclude the remarkable acts of Mr. Fox. After his seat had been so vacated, he got himself re-elected for a borough, under the influence of the Earl of Granard, a zealous Anti-Unionist. Here he once more betrayed the country, and was appointed a Judge when the subject was decided.



second debate upon the reception of the address, he would, according to all precedents, resign his situation; whilst an increased majority, however small, in favour of his measure, might give plausible grounds for pressing it forward at all hazards. No wonder, then, that the excitement and anxiety were intense on that day. Sir Jonah Barrington describes the scene:—

“The people collected in vast multitudes around the House; a strong sensation was everywhere perceptible. Immense numbers of ladies of distinction crowded at an early hour into the galleries, and by their presence and their gestures animated that patriotic spirit, upon the prompt energy of which alone depended the fate of Ireland.

“Secret messengers were dispatched in every direction to bring in loitering or reluctant members. Every emissary that Government could rely upon was busily employed the entire morning; and five and thirty minutes after four o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th of January, 1799, the House met to decide—by the adoption or rejection of the address—the question of national independence or annihilation. Within the corridors of the House, a shameless and unprecedented alacrity appeared among the friends of the Government.

“Mr. Cooke, the Under-Secretary, who, throughout all the subsequent stages of the question, was the private and efficient actuary of the Parliamentary seduction, on this night exceeded even himself, both in his public and private exertions to gain over the wavering members. Admiral Pakenham, a naturally friendly and good-natured gentleman, that night acted like the captain of a pressgang, and actually *hauled* in some members who were desirous of retiring. He had declared that he would act in *any* capacity, according to the exigencies of his party; and he did not shrink from his task.

“This debate, in point of warmth, much exceeded the former. Lord Castlereagh sat long silent; his eye ran round the assembly, as if to ascertain his situation, and was often withdrawn with a look of uncertainty and disappointment. The members had a little increased since the last division, principally by members who had not declared themselves, and of whose opinions the Secretary was ignorant.”

When the address was reported, on the reading of that part of it which related to the Union, Sir Lawrence Parsons offered an amendment, objecting to the paragraph which “pledged the House, under a meta-

phorical expression (‘maintaining and exploring a connection,’ &c.), to admit the principle of the Legislative Union.” Two short passages of his long speech are enough to show its spirit:—

“Were the Union ever so good a measure, why bring it forward at that time? Was it not evidently to take advantage of England’s strength there, and their own internal weakness? It was always in times of division and disaster that a nation availed itself of the infirmities of its neighbour, to obtain an unjust dominion. That Great Britain should desire to do so he did not much wonder; for what nation did not desire to rule another? Nor was he surprised that there should be some among them base enough to conspire with her in doing so; for no country could expect to be so fortunate as not to have betrayers and parricides among its citizens.”

“Annihilate the Parliament of Ireland! that is the cry that came across the water. Now is the time: Ireland is weak—Ireland is divided—Ireland is appalled by civil war—Ireland is covered with troops—martial law brandishes its sword throughout the land; now is the time to put down Ireland for ever—now strike the blow! *Who?* Is it you? Will you obey that voice? Will you betray your country?”

On the second debate, the most important speech in favour of union (though Castlereagh spoke strongly) was that of Mr. William Smith, a barrister—afterwards rewarded with the place of a Baron of the Exchequer. He addressed himself principally to the refutation of the main constitutional objection to an union decreed by Parliament—namely, the objection that Parliament had been “elected to make laws, and not legislatures,”—that it had no powers to divest itself of its legislative capacity to give itself away to another people, still less to sell itself, and sell its constituents along with itself. Mr. Smith said:—

“Of the competency of Parliament to the enactment of such reform, he had never heard any doubts expressed; and the arguments which he thought might be offered against the alleged right were inconclusive, yet, perhaps, as plausible as any that could be urged against the competency of the Legislature to a decree of union. That the authority of the Parliament had this extent, he had not the slightest doubt. His opinion,” he said, “was founded on precedent, on the mischiefs which would result from a contrary doctrine, on the express authority of constitutional writers, and on the genuine principles of the Constitution itself. By



enacting an union, Parliament would do no more than change (it would not surrender or subvert) the Constitution. Ireland, after a Legislative incorporation, would still be governed by three estates; and her inhabitants would enjoy all their privileges unimpaired. If the Legislature could new-model the succession of the Crown, or change the established religion, it might certainly ordain those alterations which an union would involve. To controvert its right would be to deny the validity of the act for the incorporation of Scotland with England and Wales. But," he added, "that if he conceived that the measure would be a surrender of national independence, he would by no means agree to it; but it would merely be an incorporation of national distinctions; nor would he promote the scheme if he thought that it would not ensure an identity or community of interests."

Between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Ponsonby the debate took a very bitter personal turn. The Secretary was provoked out of his usual cool indifference. To the bar he applied the term "pettifoggers;" to the Opposition, "cabal—combinators—desperate faction;" and to the nation itself, "barbarism—ignorance," and "insensibility to *protection and paternal regards* she had ever experienced from the British nation." His speech was severe beyond anything he had ever uttered within the walls of Parliament, and far exceeded the powers he was supposed to possess.

After many speeches on each side, Mr. Plunket arose; and, in what Sir Jonah Barrington calls "the ablest speech ever heard from any member in that Parliament," went at once to the grand and decisive point,—the incompetence of Parliament. He could go no farther in principle than Mr. Ponsonby, but his language was irresistible, and he left nothing to be urged. It was perfect in eloquence, and unanswerable in reasoning. Its effect was indescribable; and for the first time Lord Castlereagh, whom he personally assailed, seemed to shrink from the encounter. That speech was of great weight, and it proved the eloquence and the fortitude of the speaker.

But a short speech on that night, which gave a new sensation and excited novel observations, was a maiden speech by Colonel O'Donnell, of Mayo County, the eldest son of Sir Neil O'Donnell, a man of very large fortune in that County. He was Colonel of a Mayo regiment. He was a brave officer, and a well-bred gentleman; and in all the situations of life he showed excellent qualities. On

this night, roused by Lord Castlereagh's invectives, he could not contain his indignation; and by anticipation, "disclaimed all future allegiance, if an union were effected; he held it as a vicious revolution, and avowed that he would take the field at the head of his regiment to oppose its execution, and would resist rebels in rich clothes as he had done the rebels in rags." And for this speech in Parliament he was dismissed his regiment without further notice.

On a division being called for, there appeared a majority of *six* against the Union. The gratification of the Anti-Unionists was unbounded; and as they walked in one by one to be counted, "the eager spectators," says Sir Jonah, "ladies as well as gentlemen, leaning over the galleries, ignorant of the result, were panting with expectation. Lady Castlereagh, then one of the finest women of the Court, appeared in the Sergeant's box, palpitating for her husband's fate. The desponding appearance and fallen crests of the Ministerial benches, and the exulting air of the Opposition members as they entered, were intelligible. Mr. Egan, Chairman of Dublin County, a large, bluff, red-faced gentleman, was the last who entered. As No. 110 was announced, he stopped a moment at the bar, flourished a stick which he held in his hand over his head, and, with the voice of a stentor, cried out, '*And I'm a hundred and eleven!*'"

The same writer has thus analyzed for us this celebrated division:—

For Mr. Ponsonby's amendment, . . .	111
For Lord Tyrone's address, . . .	105
Majority against Government, . . .	6

On this debate the members who voted were circumstanced as follows:—

Members holding offices during pleasure, . . .	69
Members rewarded by offices for their votes, . . .	19
Member openly seduced in the body of the House, . . .	1
Commoners created peers, or their wives peeresses, for their votes, . . .	18
Total, . . .	102
Supposed to be uninfluenced, . . .	3
The House composed of . . .	300
Voted that night, . . .	216
Absent members, . . .	84

Of these eighty-four absent members, twenty-four were kept away by absolute necessity, and of the residue there can be no doubt they were not friends to the Union, from this plain reason, that the Government had the power of enforcing the attendance of all dependent members.



Thus the moral effect of this victory—to those who knew the composition of the House—was much greater than was indicated by the mere numerical majority. It was hoped that “Union” was defeated for ever.

But now, in the very moment of triumph, and even by the means taken to make that triumph definitive and irreversible, the tide was turned.

The members assembled in the lobby were preparing to separate, when Mr. Ponsonby requested they would return into the House and continue a very few minutes, as he had business of the utmost importance for their consideration. This produced a profound silence. Mr. Ponsonby then, in a few words, “congratulated the House and the country on the honest and patriotic assertion of their liberties; but declared that he considered there would be no security against future attempts to overthrow their independence but by a direct and absolute declaration of the rights of Irishmen, recorded upon their journals, as the decided sense of the people through their Parliament; and he therefore without further preface moved, ‘*That this House will ever maintain the undoubted birthright of Irishmen, by preserving an independent Parliament of Lords and Commons residing in this kingdom, as stated and approved by His Majesty and the British Parliament in 1782.*’”

Lord Castlereagh, conceiving that further resistance was unavailing, only said, “that he considered such a motion of the most dangerous tendency; however, if the House were determined on it, he begged to declare his entire dissent, and on their own heads be the consequences of so wrong and inconsiderate a measure.” No further opposition was made by Government, and, the Speaker putting the question, a loud cry of approbation followed, with but two negatives, those of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Toler (Lord Norbury); the motion was carried, and the members were rising to withdraw, when the Speaker, wishing to be strictly correct, called to Mr. Ponsonby to *write* down his motion accurately. He accordingly walked to the table to write it down.

During this short delay the Ministerialists and Opposition regarded one another in silence. Some members who had voted with Mr. Ponsonby did not wish the Government to be finally defeated. They had heard of the determination of the Castle to buy a majority, and that at very high prices; and these patriots, though they would not give themselves

away, desired to sell themselves. Accordingly, when Mr. Ponsonby’s absolute resolution was put in writing, and the Speaker had read it and put the question, and a loud cry of “*Aye*” burst forth, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, of Louth County, desired to be heard before the resolution should finally pass. He said he was “adverse to the Union—had voted against it—but did not wish to bind himself *for ever*; possible circumstances might occur which should render that measure expedient for the empire,” &c. This was caught at by some moderate and hesitating members of Parliament—by some from honest, and by others from dishonest motives—amongst others, by John Claudius Beresford (of the Riding-House); and the motion was not pressed by Mr. Ponsonby, for fear of a defeat.\*

This created great despondency and alarm amongst the honest Anti-Unionists. But for this incident Cornwallis and Castlereagh must probably have resigned; but now chagrin and disappointment had changed sides, and the friends of the Union who, a moment before, had considered their measure as nearly extinguished, rose upon their success, retorted in their turn, and opposed its being withdrawn. It was, however, too tender a ground for either party to insist upon a division; a debate was equally to be avoided, and the motion was suffered to be withdrawn. Sir Henry Cavendish keenly and sarcastically remarked that “it was a retreat after a victory.” After a day and a night’s debate, without intermission, the House adjourned at eleven o’clock the ensuing morning.

Upon the rising of the House the populace became tumultuous, and a violent disposition against those who had supported the Union was manifest, not only amongst the common people, but amongst those of a much higher class, who had been mingling with them.

On the Speaker’s coming out of the House the horses were taken from his carriage, and he was drawn in triumph through the streets by the people, who conceived the whimsical idea of tackling the Lord Chancellor to the coach, and (as a captive general in a Roman triumph) forcing him to tug at the chariot of his conqueror.

The populace closely pursued his lordship for that extraordinary purpose; he escaped with great difficulty, and fled, with a pistol in his hand, to a receding

\* Those “possible circumstances” did occur, and very soon. Both Mr. Fortescue and others who had voted with Ponsonby voted for the Union on its passage in the next session.



doorway in Clarendon Street. But the people, who pursued him in sport, set up a loud laugh at him as he stood terrified against the door. They offered him no personal violence, and returned in high glee to their more innocent amusement of drawing the Speaker.

Formally, however, and for the moment, the division of that day was a triumph. A scene of joy and triumph appeared universal; every countenance had a smile, throughout all ranks and classes of the people; men shook their neighbours heartily by the hand, as if the Minister's defeat was an event of individual good fortune; the mob seemed as well disposed to joy as mischief, and that was saying much for a Dublin assemblage. But a view of their enemies, as they came skulking from behind the corridors, occasionally roused them to no very tranquil temperature. Some members had to try their speed, and others their intrepidity.

Sir Jonah Barrington, who looked on at all these proceedings with the eye rather of a humourist than of a statesman, tells us that Mr. Richard Martin, unable to get clear, turned on his hunters, and boldly faced a mob of many thousands with a small pocket pistol in his hand. He swore most vehemently that, if they advanced six inches on him, he would immediately "shoot *every mother's babe* of them as dead as that paving stone" (kicking one). The united spirit and fun of his declaration, and his little pocket pistol aimed at ten thousand men, women, and children, were so entirely to the taste of our Irish populace that all symptoms of hostility ceased. They gave him three cheers, and he regained his home without further molestation.

In the House of Lords, on the same question, upon the reception of this address, Lord Clare carried everything with a high hand. The same handful of spirited peers who had voted against union on the former division again opposed it; and it is remarked that Dr. Dickson, Bishop of Down, and Marlay, Bishop of Limerick, were the only two spiritual peers who ventured to stand up against the stern and haughty Chancellor. The Bishop of Limerick was Grattan's uncle, and the Bishop of Down was an intimate friend of Mr. Fox. That degraded assemblage, the Irish House of Peers, many of whom had bought their titles within the past few years for money, or for the Castle votes of their borough members, and others of whom were promised a noble price for those boroughs to promote the Union, lay helplessly prostrate at the feet of Government, and the low-born but

audacious Chancellor cracked his whip over the coroneted slaves.

Not much business of great national importance was transacted in the remainder of that session; the Government had resolved to employ all its resources in favour of union during the recess. The Loyalist Claim Bill, however, was passed, under which bill the country was afterwards charged more than a million sterling to compensate "loyalists" who had suffered loss by the insurrection. An attempt was made to pass also a "Rebel Disqualification Bill;" the title was "A Bill for preventing Persons who have ever taken the Oath of the United Irishmen from voting for Members to serve in Parliament." On the second reading, this bill of disfranchisement was opposed by Sir Hercules Langrishe, supported vehemently, of course, by Dr. Duigenan, John Claudius Beresford, and Mr. Ogle, but was defeated.

A very singular discussion took place in the House of Commons this session, on the presentation of a petition from Mr. Thomas Judkin Fitzgerald, known as the "flogging sheriff" of Tipperary. It seems that he had been so wanton and indiscriminate in his flagellations that he thought even the "Indemnity Act" not sufficient to screen him from the legal consequences of such a raging loyalty, and this petition was to ask a special indemnity for himself. "Many actions," the petition said, "had been brought, and many more threatened." Several members of Parliament from Munster bore the warmest testimony to the zeal and activity of this monster in dealing with rebels. The Attorney-General "bore testimony, from official information as well as from local knowledge, to the very spirited and meritorious conduct of Mr. Fitzgerald, and he trusted the House would cheerfully accede to the prayer of the petition." Mr. Yelverton then read to the House the sworn testimony of witnesses in one case—that of Mr. Wright, which has been already mentioned.

"The action," he said, "brought by Mr. Wright was for assault and battery. It appeared that Mr. Wright was a teacher of the French language, of which he was employed as professor by two eminent boarding schools at Clonmel, and in the families of several respectable gentlemen in the town and neighbourhood.

"Mr Wright had heard that Mr. Fitzgerald had received some charges of a seditious nature against him, and with a promptitude not very characteristic of conscious guilt he immediately went to the house of Mr. Fitzgerald, whom he did



not find at home, and afterwards to that of another magistrate, who was also out, for the purpose of surrendering himself for trial. He went again the same day, accompanied by a gentleman, to the house of Mr. Fitzgerald, and being shown into his presence, explained the purpose of his coming, when Mr. Fitzgerald, drawing his sword, said, 'Down on your knees, you rebellious scoundrel, and receive your sentence!' In vain did the poor man protest his innocence; in vain did he implore trial, on his knees. Mr. Fitzgerald sentenced him first to be flogged, and then shot. The unfortunate man surrendered his keys to have his papers searched, and expressed his readiness to suffer any punishment the proof of guilt could justify. But no—this was not agreeable to Mr. Fitzgerald's principles of jurisdiction; his mode was first to sentence, then punish, and afterwards investigate. His answer to the unfortunate man was, 'What, you Carmelite rascal! do you dare to speak after sentence?' and then struck him, and ordered him to prison.

"Next day this unhappy man was dragged to a ladder in Clonmel Street, to undergo his sentence. He knelt down in prayer with his hat before his face. Mr. Fitzgerald came up, dragged his hat from him and trampled on it, seized the man by the hair, dragged him to the earth, kicked him, and cut him across the forehead with his sword, and then had him stripped naked, tied up to the ladder, and ordered him fifty lashes.

"Major Rial, an officer in the town, came up as the fifty lashes were completed, and asked Mr. F. the cause. Mr. F. handed the major a note written in French, saying he did not himself understand French, though he understood Irish, but he (Major Rial) would find in that letter what would justify him in flogging the scoundrel to death.

"Major Rial read the letter. He found it to be a note addressed for the victim, translated in these words:—

" 'SIR,—*I am* extremely sorry I cannot wait on you at the hour appointed, being unavoidably obliged to attend Sir Lawrence Parsons. Yours, BARON DE CLUES.'

"Notwithstanding this translation, which Major Rial read to Mr. Fitzgerald, he ordered fifty lashes more to be inflicted, and with such peculiar severity, that, horrid to relate, the bowels of the bleeding victim could be perceived to be convulsed and working through his wounds! Mr. Fitzgerald, finding he could not continue the application of his cat-o'-nine-tails on that part without cutting his way into

his body, ordered the waistband of his breeches to be cut open, and fifty more lashes to be inflicted there. He then left the unfortunate man bleeding and suspended, while he went to the barrack to demand a file of men to come and shoot him; but, being refused by the commanding officer, he came back and sought for a rope to hang him, but could not get one. He then ordered him to be cut down and sent back to prison, where he was confined in a dark, small room, with no other furniture than a wretched pallet of straw, without covering, and there he remained six or seven days, without medical assistance! \*

The Attorney-General, in reply, said: "The petitioner, whose exertions had been productive of the happiest consequences, only complained of the persecutions to which he was exposed. His property, and what was of infinitely more importance to an honourable man, his character, was at stake." He also censured Mr. Yelverton, and said that gentleman would have acted more becomingly by awaiting in discreet patience the testimony offered by the petitioner, &c. The petition was at length referred to a committee, then to a *secret* committee. Nothing seems to have been done upon it; but Mr. Judkin Fitzgerald afterwards received a considerable pension "for his active services in quelling the rebellion." †

Before the adjournment of Parliament, the Anti-Unionists conceived they might preclude the possibility of any conflict between the two Parliaments—and thus take one main argument away from the Unionists—by the simple measure of a *Regency Act*, enacting that the Regency in Ireland should for ever be exercised by the same person who should be Regent of England. Lord Castlereagh opposed the

\* Mr. Plowden records another case, almost precisely alike, in which Fitzgerald's victim was a young man named Doyle, a respectable tradesman of Carrick. The action was tried at Clonmel Spring Assizes, in 1801. Mr. Plowden says: "The plaintiff, who was a young man of excellent character and untainted loyalty, was seized in the street by the defendant, in order to be flagellated. In vain did he protest his innocence, which was also supported by some of the most respectable inhabitants of the place. He begged to have Captain Jephson sent for, the commander of the yeomanry, of which he was a member; that was refused. He offered to go to instant execution if the least trace of guilt appeared against him on inquiry; that was also refused. Bail was offered to any amount for his appearance. 'No,' says the sheriff, 'I know by his face that he is a traitor—a Carmelite scoundrel.' The plaintiff was tied to the whipping-post: he received one hundred lashes, till his ribs appeared. The young man's innocence was afterwards fully established. He applied to a court of law for redress; the action was tried at Clonmel Assizes; these facts fully proved; an Orange jury acquitted the defendant."

† Plowden's *Hist. Review*, 5th vol.



measure, being unwilling to lose any of his arguments, and maintained that such an Act would not meet the difficulty.

His lordship's opinion was, that it would not prove a remedy for the inconvenience complained of. It went, in his mind, only to a part of the evil, namely, the effect—but left the cause of the evil untouched. Thus the great malady still remained, and the connection between both countries would in no instance be better secured. Two Parliaments, perfectly equal in point of rights, might at any future period differ respecting their choice of a regent; and, therefore, the bill could not effect that unity of the executive which the measure proposed to establish.

Circumstanced as the countries were, the questions of peace and war, of treaties with foreign powers, of different religions, might at some future period lead to a difference of decision between their Parliaments; and such an occurrence would shake the connection, and, in consequence, the empire, to its foundations.

If questions of comparative advantage between countries might arise, how could a Regency Bill operate as a remedy for the evil?

His lordship wished to be informed how a bill, which went to establish the unity of the regal powers, could identify the necessary powers of a regent for other countries? Might not the particular circumstances of one country differ so materially from the other that the Regency for both kingdoms could not conveniently be exercised by the same person? Or, did not the bill go to oblige the monarch to appoint one and the same regent, which, in fact, went to restrict the regal authority? Thus, either the regal powers were curtailed, or the Regency Bill was inefficient to remove the inconvenience it went to remedy. The Regent was, to all intents and purposes, a deputy; and could a Regent in that case appoint a Lord-Lieutenant? Could a deputy appoint a deputy? He presumed he could not; and should a Regent send over a Lord-Lieutenant to that country, he was satisfied that the Council could object to his authority.

His lordship read part of a speech of Mr. Fox, to show that the adjustment of 1782 was not considered as a final one; that it went merely to quiet the political struggle which then existed; and that it was indispensably necessary to give up something for that imperial purpose.

His lordship concluded by saying that the measure was inefficient to the purpose it held forth, calculated to blind the country, and disgrace the Legislature.

It must be acknowledged that these arguments of Lord Castlereagh have considerable weight, and that the only possibility of Ireland's real and effective independence lies in complete separation from England. It was on the discussion of the Regency Bill that Mr. Foster, the Speaker, took occasion to express his sentiments with great weight and earnestness against the project of Union, contending that the Settlement of 1782 was a final settlement, and that the pending Regency Bill would remove the last remaining difficulty in the way of harmonious action between the two independent countries. The Regency Bill, however, was not acted upon. That, with all other legislation having reference to the Union, was thrown over till the next session, by which time Lord Castlereagh hoped to have his votes ready to carry his grand measure. He violently opposed the Regency Bill, and got rid of it by moving an adjournment of the House, which was carried.

In the meantime, the English Lords and Commons were also busy upon the Union; and we must now turn from College Green to Westminster for a time.

## CHAPTER XII.

1799.

Union proposed in British Parliament—Opposed by Sheridan—Supported by Canning—Great Speech of Mr. Pitt—Ireland to be Assured of English Protection—Of English Capital—Promises to the Catholics—Mr. Pitt's Resolutions for Union—Sheridan—Dundas—Resolutions Passed—In the House of Lords—Labours of Cornwallis and Castlereagh—Corruption—Intimidation—Onslaught of Troops in Dublin—Lord Cornwallis makes a Tour—Lord Downshire Disgraced—Handcock of Athlone—His Song and Palinode—Opposition Inorganic—The Orangemen—The Catholics—Arts to delude them—Dublin Catholics against Union—O'Connell—System of Terror—County Meeting dispersed by Troops—Castlereagh's Announcement of "Compensation."

On the same day (January 22, 1799) on which the Union was proposed to the Irish Parliament in the speech of Lord Cornwallis, the same business was brought before both Houses in England. Mr. Pitt was so confident of his power to carry that measure, that he did not think it advisable to await the result of the deliberations of the Irish Senate upon it; but presuming on his strength in the Irish, as much as in the British Houses of Parliament, he opened his plan of operations in both on the same day. Accordingly, on the 22d of January,



1799, a message from the Sovereign was delivered to the British Peers by Lord Granville, recommending an Union in the following terms:—

“His Majesty is persuaded that the unremitting industry with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of effecting the separation of Ireland from this kingdom cannot fail to engage the particular attention of Parliament. And His Majesty recommends it to this House to consider of the most effectual means of counteracting and finally defeating this design; and he trusts that a review of all the circumstances which have recently occurred (joined to the sentiments of mutual affection and common interests) will dispose the Parliaments of both kingdoms to provide, in the manner which they shall judge most expedient, for settling such a complete and final adjustment as may best tend to improve and perpetuate a connection.”

The same day a similar message was presented to the Commons by Mr. Dundas, who moved that it should be taken into consideration on the morrow. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, though a member for an English borough, did not forget that he was an Irishman. He immediately rose; and while he declared his concurrence in the general sentiments which the message conveyed, he thought it but fair thus to give early notice that he viewed the bringing forward of that question at that time as a measure replete with so much mischief, that he held it his duty to take the first opportunity to do everything in his power to arrest the further progress of it.

Mr. Pitt, in reply, said he was at a loss to guess on what grounds the honourable gentleman would attempt to satisfy the House. They ought not to proceed to the consideration of the important measure which His Majesty, from his paternal regard to the interests of the empire, had thought proper to recommend to their consideration. At the same time he informed the House that his intention was only to propose an address to His Majesty on the next day; and then, after a sufficient interval (about ten days), to proceed to the further discussion of the subject.

When the address, accordingly, was proposed the next day, Mr. Sheridan made a long and able speech against the whole project. “He thought it incumbent,” he said, “upon Ministers to offer some explanations with regard to the failure of the last solemn adjustment between the countries, which had been generally deemed final. There was the stronger

reason to expect this mode of proceeding, when the declaration of the Irish Parliament in 1782\* was recollected. The British Legislature having acquiesced in this declaration, no other basis of connection ought to be adopted.”

He then spoke of the injustice of attempting to consummate this union by intimidation and corruption. He contended that the adjustment proposed would only unite two wretched bodies—that the minds would still be distinct, and that eventually it might lead to separation.

“Let no suspicion,” he continued, “be entertained that we gained our object by intimidation or corruption. Let our Union be an union of affection and attachment, of plain-dealing and free-will. Let it be an union of mind and spirit, as well as of interest and power. Let it not resemble those Irish marriages which commenced in fraud and were consummated by force. Let us not commit a brutal rape on the independence of Ireland, when, by tenderness of behaviour, we may have her the willing partner of our fate. The state of Ireland did not admit such a marriage. Her bans ought not to be published to the sound of the trumpet, with an army of forty thousand men. She was not qualified for hymeneal rites, when the grave and the prison held so large a share of her population.”

Sheridan was answered by George Canning, who spoke earnestly in favour of an Union. Canning is sometimes claimed as an Irishman; but he was born in London, and never in all his life allowed the claim, no more than Swift, who said it was too hard if he was to be considered an Irishman, although he had the misfortune to be “dropped” in that island. At any rate, Mr. Canning never in his whole career showed the slightest Irish feeling; and on this occasion he viewed the question wholly as an Englishman, as he was. Here is an extract from his speech:—

“It had been said that for the space of three hundred years we had oppressed

\* “We beg leave to represent to His Majesty that the subjects of Ireland are entitled to a free Constitution; that the Imperial Crown of Ireland is inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, on which connection the happiness of both nations essentially depends; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct dominion, having a Parliament of her own, the sole Legislature thereof; that there is no power whatsoever competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. Upon which exclusive right of legislation we consider the very essence of our liberties to depend—a right which we claim as the birthright of the people of Ireland, and which we are determined, in every situation of life, to assert and maintain.”



Ireland; but for the last twenty years the conduct of England had been a *series of concessions*. The Irish wanted an octennial Parliament; it was granted. They wished for an independent Legislature; they had their wish. They desired a free trade; it was given to them. A very large body of the people of Ireland desired a repeal of a part of the Penal Code, which they deemed oppressive; the repeal was granted. The honourable gentleman had spoken as if nothing had been done for Ireland but what she extorted, and what she had a right to demand. He seemed to think that past favours were no proofs of kindness. It was undoubtedly expedient that these advantages should be given to Ireland, because her prosperity was the prosperity of England; but *they were not privileges, which she could claim as matters of right.*"

It was on the 31st, after the message had been again read, that Mr. Pitt made his great speech, fully developing the view which the British Ministry desired to be received on the question of Union. In justice to the Unionists, it is necessary to give an abstract of what this able statesman urged on his own part:—

"The nature of the existing connection," he said, "evidently did not afford that degree of security which, even in times less dangerous and less critical, was necessary to enable the empire to avail itself of its strength and resources.

"The Settlement of 1782, far from deserving the name of a final adjustment, was one that left the connection between Great Britain and Ireland exposed to all the attacks of party and all the effects of accident. That settlement consisted in the demolition of the system which before held the two countries together—a system unworthy of the liberality of Great Britain, and injurious to the interests of Ireland. But to call that a system in itself—to call that a glorious fabric of human wisdom, which was no more than the mere demolition of another system—was a perversion of terms."

Mr. Pitt then quoted the Parliamentary journals, to prove that the repeal of the Declaratory Act was not considered by the Minister of the day as precluding endeavours for the formation of an ulterior settlement between the kingdoms.

Mr. Pitt was good enough to add, that Great Britain had always felt a common interest in the *safety* of Ireland; but that interest was never so obvious and urgent as when the common enemy made her attack upon Britain through the medium of Ireland, and when the attack upon Ireland tended to deprive her of her con-

nection with Britain, and to substitute in lieu of it the new government of the French Republic. When that danger threatened Ireland, the purse of Great Britain was opened for the wants of Ireland, as for the necessities of England.

To those who know how Ireland has been drained of her wealth and crushed in her industry since the Union, and by the Union, the following paragraph of Mr. Pitt's speech will seem strange:—

"Among the great and known defects of Ireland, one of the most prominent features was its want of industry and of capital. How were those wants to be supplied but by blending more closely with Ireland the industry and capital of Great Britain?"

The Minister enlarged very much upon the benefit which Ireland would derive from the certainty of being defended by England against foreign enemies, and upon her inability to protect herself. Of course, he did not advert to the fact (which he well knew) that the great majority of the Irish people, Protestants as well as Catholics, knew of no other foreign enemy than England; that in resisting French invasions of Ireland, England was defending not Ireland but herself; and that in capturing Frenchmen at Ballinamuck, or in Lough Swilly, the English forces were not capturing Ireland's enemies but Ireland's friends. He drew a glowing picture of the great advantages which the lesser country would draw from her union with the greater; the protection which she would secure to herself in the hour of danger; the most effectual means of increasing her commerce and improving her agriculture; the command of English capital; the infusion of English manners and English industry; necessarily tending to meliorate her condition, to accelerate the progress of internal civilization, and to terminate those feuds and dissensions which distracted the country, and which she did not possess within herself the power either to control or to extinguish. She would see the avenue to honours, to distinctions, and exalted situations in the general seat of empire, opened to all those whose abilities and talents enabled them to indulge an honourable and laudable ambition.

He did not forget to make his bid for the Catholics; and without giving in this speech any distinct pledge of emancipation by the Imperial Parliament, he intimated very clearly that the principal difficulty in the way of that measure would be removed by the Union. "No man could say," he remarked, "that, in



the present state of things, and while Ireland remained a separate kingdom, full concessions could be made to the Catholics, without endangering the State, and shaking the Constitution of Ireland to its centre. On the other hand, when the conduct of the Catholics should be such as to make it safe for the Government to admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the established religion, and when the temper of the times should be favourable to such a measure, it was obvious that this question might be agitated in an United Imperial Parliament with much greater safety than it could be in a separate Legislature."

The minister dwelt much upon the weakness of Ireland, which was not, he said, able to protect herself—he had not said so in the days of the volunteers; upon the confusions and atrocities which prevailed at that moment throughout the country—but he did not say that it was *he* who had ordered and organized those horrors; upon "the hostile division of sects in Ireland, and the animosities between ancient settlers and original inhabitants"—but without saying that English policy had created and perpetuated those evils; upon the "ignorance and want of civilization which," he was pleased to say, "marked that country more than any in Europe"—but he forgot to say that for a century it had been a penal offence for any Catholic to go to school, or to teach a school. For all this, he insisted there was no cure but in the formation of a general Imperial Legislature, free alike from terror and from resentment, removed from the danger and agitation, uninfluenced by the prejudices, and uninflamed by the passions, of that distracted country.

Ireland, Mr. Pitt admitted, might suffer somewhat "by the absence of the chief nobility and gentry who would flock to the imperial metropolis;" but this disadvantage would be far more than counterbalanced by the beneficial results of the system in other respects. And as to the idea that the project of union with England meant subjecting Ireland to a foreign yoke, Mr. Pitt met that with a quotation from Virgil—

"——Nec Teucris Italos parere jubebo,  
Nec nova regna peto: paribus se legibus ambo  
Invictæ gentes æterna in sædera mittant."

All this looks to-day like cruel and deadly irony. It was with the most severe gravity, however, that Mr. Pitt enumerated all the great blessings which would flow from the Union to Ireland. If England was to benefit by it, he did

not seem to be aware of that circumstance, did not think of it apparently at all,—so much absorbed was he by the generous thought of binding up the bleeding wounds of Ireland, and whispering peace to her distracted spirit. He ended by moving his eight resolutions, to serve as a basis for the proposed Union. As these preliminary resolutions were greatly enlarged in the subsequent "Articles" and "Act of Union," they need not be here given at length. They were to the effect that it was fit to propose an Union of the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland. That the succession to the Crown should remain settled as it was. That the United Kingdom should be represented in one Parliament, in proportions afterwards to be agreed upon. That the two Churches of England and Ireland should be preserved. That the people of the two kingdoms should stand on the same footing as to trade and navigation, and no duties should be imposed on export or import between the two islands. That the charge for the debts of the two kingdoms should be separately defrayed; the proportions of future expenses to be settled by the two Parliaments previous to the Union. That all laws and courts should remain as they were then established, subject to future modifications by the United Parliament. Mr. Sheridan opposed these resolutions from first to last.

"If the condition of Ireland," he said, "were really as deplorable as it was stated to be, the House ought to be informed from what misconceptions such evils had arisen, amidst the advantages which God and nature had bestowed upon her. It might be concluded, indeed, that her poverty was chiefly occasioned by the narrow, unwise policy of Britain, a policy which, he was glad to find, the Minister now disapproved. Her weakness, perhaps, was not so great as it was supposed to be; and, if it were, it was ungenerous to insult her. Such an insult would not have been offered to her while her volunteers were in arms."

In the course of the several debates which took place, Sheridan was supported by several eminent members of the House; by Mr. Grey (afterwards Lord Grey), by General Fitzpatrick (who had been Irish Secretary under Lord Portland), Mr. Tierney, the Honourable Mr. St. John, Mr. Hobhouse, and others; most of whom opposed the measure on account of the time being improper for its discussion. Of those who supported it may be named Sir John Mitford, Mr. Perceval, Mr. Dudley Ryder; Mr. Secretary Dundas,



afterwards Lord Melville (a Scotchman), spoke warmly for the Union, and in his speech took occasion to throw out again the bait which was to catch the Catholics; and as he was a member of the Administration, his words were supposed to have weight. He said, "that, after union, the Protestants would lay aside their jealousies and distrust, being certain that against any attempt to endanger their Establishment the whole strength of the united Legislature would be exerted; and, on the other hand, the Catholics would expect that their cause would be candidly and impartially considered by a general Parliament, the great body of which would be relieved from the apprehensions and animosities interwoven with the constitution of the existing Legislature."

Mr. Dundas further vaunted the excellent effects which, he said, had followed the union of Scotland with England, and referred to a letter of Queen Anne to the Northern Parliament, predicting the various blessings, with respect to religion, liberty, and property, which would result from the scheme of incorporation; and, he said, that not one syllable of her predictions had failed.

It is observable that, throughout the whole of these debates in the English Parliament, not one of the advocates of union ever seems to have thought of the interest or honour of his own country. It was for Ireland they were all concerned. At length, on the 12th of February, came the division on bringing up the report. The *ayes* were 120; *nays*, 16. This was followed by a conference between the Lords and Commons; and the House of Peers ordered a month's interval before entering upon the discussion in their House.

On the 19th of March, the matter was brought before the British House of Peers by Lord Grenville. He went through all the common arguments for the Union, and repeated the usual carefully calculated phrases intended to win the Irish Catholics, without any distinct ministerial pledge for emancipation. He said:—

"The good consequence of union would quickly appear, in the progress of civilization, the prevalence of order, the increase of industry and wealth, and the improvement of moral habits. The Hibernian Protestants would feel themselves secure under the protection of a Protestant Imperial Parliament; and the anxiety of the Catholics would be allayed by the hope of a more candid examination of their claims from a Parliament not influenced by the prejudices of a local Legislature."

The Union was opposed by Earl Fitzwilliam, advocated by the Marquis of Townshend, Lord Clifton, Lord Minto, the Bishop of Llandaff, and many others. Lord Moira opposed it. Lord Camden (the rebellion Viceroy) supported it. This nobleman took occasion to enter on a defence of his own administration in Ireland, which seemed indeed to need defence. He denied that the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam was productive of disorder or disaffection, and affirmed that the rigorous proceedings of the Government were rendered necessary by that seditious spirit which existed independently of the Catholic question. He declared that all the severities imputed to his administration were *preceded* by acts of outrage, of insurrection, or of rebellion. He allowed that his conduct, in adopting active and vigorous measures, and apprehending some of the leaders, did accelerate the rebellion; but, as the same steps facilitated its suppression, he did not think that he could justly be blamed.

Lord Minto advised the insertion of a distinct clause in the Articles or Act of Union, providing for the "just claims of the Catholic Irish;" but he did not insist on this, and Ministers took care that no such clause should be inserted. Their policy at that moment, with regard to Catholics, was only to whisper hopes and private promises into the ear of bishops and peers of that persuasion, as will be seen more fully hereafter. At the end of a long debate the address was finally adopted, embracing Mr. Pitt's proposals; and so the matter rested until the next session.

The remainder of the year 1799 was a busy time for Lord Cornwallis, Lord Clare, Lord Castlereagh, and Under-Secretary Cooke. They were all excessively mortified at the temporary failure of this measure; but if certain too credulous and generous Irishmen fondly imagined that the danger was over, they were signally mistaken. Neither Clare nor Castlereagh was the man to be so easily discouraged at a crisis on which their own future political honours and existence depended. They had it in command from London to carry the Union through. Mr. Pitt, by a *private* dispatch to Lord Cornwallis, desired that the measure should not be pressed unless he could be *certain* of a majority of fifty;\* and his lordship knew what that meant, coming from Mr. Pitt. Lord Cornwallis seems to have been quite a willing agent in the system of corruption and intima-

\* "This original dispatch I saw and read."—*Sir J. Barrington.*



tion now to be inaugurated on a grander scale than ever before; and, indeed, to an extent never witnessed, either before or since, in any country of the globe. And never had a government two more efficient officers for such a purpose than Clare, the Lord Chancellor, and Castlereagh, the Secretary. The Chancellor, in fact, was too violent and arrogant to be politic. He called that a pusillanimous idea; and could have been well content for his part to carry the Union with a majority of one, and then dragoon the island into submission. In his rage at the first check in Parliament, and at the somewhat tumultuous rejoicings of the Dublin mob (who, however, hurt nobody), he hastily had the Privy Council called together, and urged the necessity of making what in Ireland is called a salutary example. Accordingly, about nine at night, a party of the military stationed in the old Custom House, near Essex Bridge, silently sallied out, with trailed arms, without any civil magistrate, and only a sergeant to command them; arriving at Capel Street, the populace were in the act of violently huzzaing for their friends, and, of course, with equal vehemence execrating their enemies; but no Riot Act was read, no magistrate appeared, and no disturbance or tumult existed to warrant military interference.

The soldiers, however, having taken a position a short way down the street, without being in any way assailed, fired a volley of balls amongst the people. Of course, a few were killed and some wounded; amongst the former were a woman and a boy. A man fell dead at the feet of Mr. P. Hamilton, the King's Proctor of the Admiralty, who, as a mere spectator, was viewing the illumination. This is only mentioned to evince the violent spirit which guided the Government of that day, and the tyrannic means which were employed to terrify the people from testifying their joy at their deliverance, as they fancied, from the proposed annexation.\*

Lord Castlereagh, however, knew a better way of going to work. The session had scarcely closed when his lordship recommenced his warfare against his country. The treasury was in his hands, patronage in his note-book, and all the influence which the scourge or the pardon, reward or punishment, could possibly produce on the trembling rebels, was openly resorted to. Lord Cornwallis determined to put Irish honesty to the test, and set out upon an experimental

tour through those parts of the country where the nobility and gentry were most likely to entertain him. He artfully selected those places where he could best make his way with corporations at public dinners, and with the aristocracy, country gentlemen, and farmers, by visiting their mansions and cottages. Ireland was thus canvassed, and every jail was converted to a hustings, at which prisoners of various grades of crime were asked to sign petitions for the Union, by the promise of pardon.\* Lord Castlereagh's ulterior efforts were extensive and indefatigable; his spirit revived, and every hour gained ground on his opponents. He clearly perceived that the ranks of the Opposition were too open to be strong, and too mixed to be unanimous. The extraordinary fate of Mr. Ponsonby's declaration of rights, and the debate on a similar motion by Lord Corry, which so shortly afterwards met a more serious negative, proved the truth of these observations, and identified the persons through whom that truth was to be afterwards exemplified.

It was soon perceived by the Anti-Unionists that Government was recruiting and marshalling its forces to carry its measure with a high hand in the next session; and that they also must do somewhat on their side to maintain the high national spirit in resistance to the hated measure. The Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Charlemont, and William Brabazon Ponsonby, member for the County of Kilkenny, sent circular letters to the Irish gentry and yeomanry, to the following effect. They were authorized, they said, by a number of gentlemen of both houses of Parliament—thirty-eight of whom were representatives of counties—to intimate their opinion that petitions to Parliament, declaring the real sense of the freeholders on the subject of a Legislative Union, would at that time be highly expedient.

The Marquis of Downshire was at once dismissed from the government of his county, the colonelcy of the Royal Downshire regiment of twelve hundred men, and his name was erased from the list of Privy Councillors.† All the resources of Government, either for reward or punishment, were to be used, and that without reserve. The management of Mr. Handcock, member for Athlone, is an example of the system of treatment opposite to that pursued towards Lord Downshire. Immediately after the close of the session

\* This fact, that felons in the jails were thus induced to sign Union petitions, was mentioned in Parliamentary debate, and not contradicted.—*Sir J. Barrington.*

† Flowden.

\* Sir J. Barrington.



of 1799 a public dinner of the patriotic members was had in Dublin, to commemorate the rescue of their country from so imminent a danger. One hundred and ten members of Parliament sat down to that splendid and triumphant entertainment.

Never was a more cordial, happy assemblage of men of rank, consideration, and *proven* integrity collected in one chamber, than upon that remarkable occasion. Every man's tried and avowed principles were supposed to be untaintable, and pledged to his own honour and his country's safety; and, amongst others, Mr. Handcock, member for Athlone, appeared to be conspicuous. He spoke strongly, gave numerous Anti-Union toasts, vowed his eternal hostility to so infamous a measure, pledged himself to God and man to resist it to the utmost, and, to finish and record his sentiments, he had composed an Anti-Union song of many stanzas, which he sung himself, with a general chorus. In short, he was the life of the party. Lord Castlereagh marked him as a man to be won upon any terms. Before Parliament assembled in the next session, Mr. Handcock was composing and singing *Union* songs. He received a large bribe in money. "But," says Sir Jonah Barrington, "still he held out until title was added to the bribe; his own conscience was not strong enough to resist the charge; the vanity of his family lusted for nobility. He wavered, but he yielded; his vows, his declaration, his song, all vanished before vanity, and the year 1800 saw Mr. Handcock, of Athlone, Lord Castlemaine." It is unnecessary to say that he voted for the Union.

The very heterogeneous nature of the Opposition which had rejected the Union in the last session gave Lord Castlereagh great facilities in breaking it down. In that fortuitous concourse of members were to be found old reformers and those who had always opposed reform, Catholic Emancipators as well as the most violent and bitter of the Orangemen. Indeed, the most fatal cause of division amongst them was their radical difference of opinion on the Catholic question. Those who had determined to support the Catholic cause, as the surest mode of preventing any future attempts to attain an union, were obliged to dissemble their intentions of proposing emancipation, lest they should disgust the ascendancy party who acted with them solely against the Union. Those who were enemies to Catholic relaxation were also obliged to conceal their wishes, lest their determination to resist that measure should disgust the

advocates of emancipation, who had united with them on the present occasion.

The *talent* of Parliament principally existed amongst the members who had formed the general opposition to the Union. Some habitual friends of administration, therefore, who had on this single question seceded from the Court, and who wished to resume their old habits on the Union being disposed of, obviously felt a portion of narrow jealousy at being *led* by those they had been accustomed to *oppose*, and reluctantly joined in any *liberal* opposition to a Court which they had been in the habit of supporting. They desired to vote against the Union in the abstract, but to commit themselves no further against the Minister. Many, upon this temporizing and ineffective principle, cautiously avoided any discussion save upon the *direct* proposition; and this was remarkable, and felt to be ruinous in the succeeding session.

In the meetings and discussions which took place during that anxious interval between the two sessions and in the first days of the new one, the Orange body held aloof from the question *as* Orangemen; and in the first days of the new session a circular was issued, signed by the "Grand Master" and "Grand Secretary," and dated "Grand Orange Lodge," exhorting Orangemen "to avoid, as injurious to the institution, all controversy upon subjects not connected with their principles." There is no doubt, however, that most of the Orangemen were for the Union, and both the Grand Master and Grand Secretary, being members of Parliament, voted for it in 1800.

To the countless petitions which were poured in, almost all *against* the Union, were signed the names of Catholics and Protestants indiscriminately; but the Catholic Bishops certainly used their influence, in many cases, to dissuade the people of their flocks from coming forward against the measure. "It may indeed be said with truth," says Mr. Plowden, "that a very great preponderancy in favour of the Union existed in the Catholic body, particularly in their nobility, gentry, and clergy." The same authority accounts for this by "the severities and indignities practised upon them after the rebellion by many of the Orange party, and the offensive affected confusion in the use of the terms papist and rebel, producing fresh soreness in the minds of many." But this is not a satisfactory account of the indifferent or hostile position assumed at that time of peril by many leading Catholics towards the Legislature of their country. If they did see some Orangemen sitting



upon the Opposition benches, they also saw there *all* their own old and tried friends and advocates; and their attitude is rather to be ascribed to the impression produced by the underhand half-promises made by people connected with the Government. Sir Jonah Barrington says:—

“The Viceroy knew mankind too well to dismiss the Catholics without a comfortable conviction of their certain emancipation; he turned to them the honest side of his countenance; the priests bowed before the soldierly condescensions of a starred veteran. The titular archbishop was led to believe he would instantly become a real prelate, and before the negotiation concluded, Dr. Troy was consecrated a decided Unionist, and was directed to send pastoral letters to his colleagues to promote it.”

Sir Jonah tells us, further, that “some of the persons, assuming to themselves the title of *Catholic leaders*, sought an audience in order to inquire from Marquis Cornwallis, ‘What would be the advantage to the Catholics if an union should happen to be effected in Ireland?’

“Mr. Bellew (brother to Sir Patrick Bellew), Mr. Lynch, and some others, had several audiences with the Viceroy; the Catholic Bishops were generally deceived into the most disgusting subservience; rewards were not withheld; Mr. Bellew was to be appointed a County Judge, but that being found impracticable, he got a secret pension, which he has now enjoyed for thirty-two years.”

But, undoubtedly, the main motive of the anti-national conduct of leading Catholics is to be sought in those uniform declarations of Ministers, both in England and in Ireland, that the Union, and the Union alone, would remove all impediments to a fair settlement of the demands of the Catholics.

There were, however, some Catholics not to be so easily deluded. The trading and commercial class of Catholics in Dublin was vehemently opposed to union; and, immediately before the opening of the session, a meeting of these people was held at the Royal Exchange to deliver their opinions upon it. It was proposed to prevent this meeting from assembling by military force—such was always Lord Clare’s first thought; but better counsels prevailed, and the meeting was held, Mr. Ambrose Moore in the chair.

No less a person than *Daniel O’Connell*, then a rising young barrister, took the leading part at this meeting, and it is interesting to see with what patriotic earnestness he then protested against the perpetration of that Union which, near

half a century later, he laid down his life in the effort to repeal. He said:—

“That under the circumstances of the present day, and the systematic calumnies flung at the Catholic character, it was more than once determined by the Roman Catholics of Dublin to stand entirely aloof, as a mere sect, from all political discussion; at the same time that they were ready, as forming generally a part of the people of Ireland, to confer with and express their opinions in conjunction with their Protestant fellow-subjects. This resolution which they had entered into gave rise to an extensive and injurious misrepresentation, and it was asserted by the advocates of Union—daringly and insolently asserted—that the Roman Catholics of Ireland were friends to the measure of Union, and silent allies to that conspiracy formed against the name, the interests, and the liberties of Ireland. This libel on the Catholic character was strengthened by the partial declarations of some mean and degenerate members of the communion, wrought upon by corruption or by fear, and, unfortunately, it was received with a too general credulity. Every Union pamphlet, every Union speech, imprudently put forth the Catholic name as sanctioning a measure which would annihilate the name of the country, and there was none to refute the calumny. In the speeches and pamphlets of Anti-Unionists it was rather admitted than denied, and, at length, the Catholics themselves were obliged to break through a resolution which they had formed, in order to guard against misrepresentation, for the purpose of repelling this worst of misrepresentations. To refute a calumny directed against them, as a sect, they were obliged to come forward as a sect, and in the face of their country to disavow the base conduct imputed to them, and to declare that the assertion of their being favourably inclined to the measure of a legislative incorporation with Great Britain was a slander the most vile—a libel the most false, scandalous, and wicked—that ever was directed against the character of an individual or a people.”

“Sir,” continued Mr. O’Connell, “it is my sentiment, and I am satisfied it is the sentiment, not only of every gentleman who now hears me, but of the Catholic people of Ireland, that if our opposition to this injurious, insulting, and hated measure of Union were to draw upon us the revival of the penal laws, we would boldly meet a proscription and oppression which would be the testimonies of our virtue, and sooner throw ourselves once



more on the mercy of our Protestant brethren, than give our assent to the political murder of our country. Yes, I know—I do know, that although exclusive advantages *may be ambiguously held forth to the Irish Catholic*, to seduce him from the sacred duty which he owes his country; I know that the Catholics of Ireland still remember that they have a country, and that they will never accept of any advantages, as a *sect*, which would debase and destroy them as a *people*.”

After which Mr. O’Connell moved certain resolutions, which were unanimously agreed to.

The first of these resolutions was—

“*Resolved*, That we are of opinion that the proposed incorporate Union of the Legislature of Great Britain and Ireland is, in fact, an extinction of the liberty of this country, which would be reduced to the abject condition of a province, surrendered to the mercy of the Minister and Legislature of another country, to be bound by their absolute will, and taxed at their pleasure by laws, in the making of which this country could have no efficient participation whatever.”

As the decisive moment approached for the trial of this great issue, men’s minds became more and more excited on both sides of the question. The patriotic leaders did what was possible to evoke a respectable body of public opinion, by way of meetings, petitions, and resolutions; but this was a service of danger, as Lord Downshire had found. A far more extraordinary example of the determination of Government to crush down all legitimate expression of public feeling occurred at a proposed county meeting in King’s County. The circumstances were thus related by Sir Lawrence Parsons, in his place in Parliament, and were never denied:—

“Some time ago Major Rogers, who commands at Birr, having been told that there was an intention of assembling the freeholders and inhabitants to deliberate on the propriety of petitioning against a Legislative Union, the Major replied that he would disperse them by force if they attempted any such thing; that the Major, however, applied to Government for directions. What answer or directions he received could only be judged of by his immediate conduct. On Sunday last, several magistrates and respectable inhabitants assembled in the session-house, when the High-Sheriff (Mr. Derby) went to them and ordered them to disperse, or he would compel them. They were about to depart, when a gentleman came and told them the army was approaching. The Assembly had but just

time to vote the resolutions, but not to sign them. They broke up, and as they went out of the session-house they saw moving towards it a column of troops with four pieces of cannon in front, matches lighted, and every disposition for an attack upon the session-house—a building so constructed that, if a cannon had been fired, it must have fallen on the magistrates and the people, and buried them in its ruins. A gentleman spoke to Major Rogers on the subject of his approaching in that hostile manner. His answer was, that he waited but for one word from the Sheriff that he might blow them to atoms! These were the dreadful measures, Sir Lawrence said, by which Government endeavoured to force the Union upon the people of Ireland, by stifling their sentiments and dragooning them into submission.”

Sir Jonah Barrington states positively that many other meetings throughout the counties were thus prevented by simple “dread of grape-shot.” English generals then quartered in various parts of the island, at a moment when either martial law still existed or the horrible memory of it was fresh, could not fail to have their own influence over proclaimed districts and a bleeding peasantry. To them nothing could be easier than to prevent any political meetings, under pretence that they might endanger the public peace.

The Anti-Union addresses, innumerable and ardent, in their very nature voluntary, and with signatures of high consideration, were stigmatized by Government journals as seditious and disloyal; “while those of the compelled, the bribed, and the culprit, were printed and circulated by every means that the Treasury or the influence of the Government could effect.”\*

There were a good many new elections held this summer; because members were persuaded to resign their seats “upon terms,” says Mr. Plowden; but he does not tell as what those terms were. In fact, they simply accepted one of the “Escheatorships,” a species of “Chiltern Hundreds,” to vacate their seats, that those seats might be filled by creatures of the Castle. In this way a small majority had already been secured before the opening of the session.

Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh, having made so good progress during the recess, now discarded all secrecy and reserve. Many of the peers and several of the com-

\* Sir Jonah Barrington. He states, and O’Connell has affirmed the same, that, notwithstanding all obstacles and intimidations, seven hundred thousand persons petitioned against union; and, notwithstanding all inducements, only three thousand petitioned for it—the most of these being Government officials and prisoners in the jails.



moners had the patronage of boroughs, the control of which was essential to the success of the Minister's project. These patrons Lord Castlereagh assailed by every means which his power and situation afforded. Lord Cornwallis was the remote, Lord Castlereagh the intermediate, and Mr. Secretary Cooke the immediate, agents on many of these bargains. Lord Shannon, the Marquis of Ely, and several other peers commanding votes, after much coquetry had been secured during the first session; but the defeat of Government rendered their future support uncertain. The Parliamentary patrons had breathing time after the preceding session, and began to tremble for their patronage and importance; and some desperate step became necessary to Government, to insure a continuance of the support of these personages.

Accordingly, Lord Castlereagh boldly announced his intention to turn the scale, by bribes to all who would accept them, under the name of *compensation* for the loss of patronage and interest. He publicly declared, *first*, that every nobleman who returned members to Parliament should be paid, in cash, £15,000 for every member so returned; *secondly*, that every member who had *purchased* a seat in Parliament should have his purchase-money repaid to him out of the Treasury of Ireland; *thirdly*, that all members of Parliament, or others, who were *losers* by the Union should be fully recompensed for their losses, and that £1,500,000 should be devoted to this service. In other words, all who should affectionately support his measure were, under some pretext or other, to share in this "bank of corruption."

A declaration so desperately and recklessly flagitious was never made in any country on earth by the Minister of any Sovereign. It was treating the elective franchise of the country as the private property of those proprietors who returned the members by means of their unconstitutional influence. It was acknowledging and consecrating the practice of those members themselves in treating their seats also as a property, from which, during their tenure, they drew profit in bribes, or place, or some substantial Court favour. And it was charging the whole expense of this nefarious transaction to the Irish tax-payers themselves, the very people who were thus to be sold by their representatives, and purchased with their own money by their enemies.

But the declaration had a powerful effect in favour of the Castle; and before the meeting of Parliament in January he

found, through the infallible information of the Under-Secretary, Mr. Cooke, that he could count upon a small majority of about eight. This he hoped to increase.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1799—1800.

Progress of Union Conspiracy—Grand Scale of Bribery—Castlereagh Organizes "Fighting Men"—Dinner at his House—Last Session of the Irish Parliament—Warm Debate the First Day—Daly Attacks Bushe and Plunket—Reappearance of Grattan—His Speech—Corry Attacks Him—Division—Majority for Government—Castlereagh Proposes "Articles" of Union—His Speech—Promises Great Gain to Ireland from Union—Ireland to "Save a Million a Year"—Proposed Constitution of United Parliament—Irish Peerage—Ponsonby—Grattan—Again a Majority for the Castle—Lord Clare's Famous Speech—Duel of Grattan and Corry—Torpor and Gloom in Dublin—The Catholics—"Articles" finally Adopted by Commons—By Lords.

IN the cool calculating head of the Irish Secretary the whole project was now matured, and its accomplishment provided for. Things were, he thought, in a good train. County meetings of freeholders were prevented by "dread of grape-shot;" the Catholic Bishops and gentry were lulled asleep by what Mr. O'Connell had well described as "hopes of advantage ambiguously held forth;" the people were crushed, disarmed, bleeding; there were one hundred and fifty thousand armed men in the country, one-third regular troops, the other two-thirds officered and controlled by Government; and above all, and beyond all, Mr. Cooke was successfully driving his bargains with the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons of the Parliament of Ireland. Yet his lordship evidently dreaded the meeting of Parliament. He loved not that inevitable encounter with so many honest, ardent, and able men, who all knew and would proclaim the villanies he was practising. In fact, he felt, with uncasiness, that the genius and eloquence of the land, as well as its integrity, were full against him; and no legislative body ever yet sitting in one house has possessed so large a proportion of grand orators, learned lawyers, and accomplished gentlemen. It may be fearlessly added, that no Parliament has ever had so large a proportion of honourable men. Had it not been so, the splendid bribes then ready to be thrust into every man's hand would have insured to the Castle a much greater majority, and we should not have seen the noble ranks of unpurchasable patriots thronging so thick on the Opposition



benches to the last. What Parliament or Congress has ever been tempted so? There is no need to make invidious or disparaging reflections; but Englishmen, and Frenchmen, and Americans, should pray that their respective Legislatures may never be subjected to such an ordeal.

But still, Castlereagh disliked this meeting with the Irish Parliament; and, as his party fell so far short of their opponents in point of talent and oratory, he bethought him of a singular expedient to make sure of an effective corps of fighting men amongst his supporters in the House. He was himself a man of most reckless courage; but he saw the necessity of infusing a little of that spirit into his party. Sir Jonah Barrington describes his system of procedure in this matter, which is too characteristic of the time and of the country to be here omitted:—

“He invited to dinner, at his house in Merrion Square, about twenty of his most staunch supporters, consisting of ‘tried men,’ and men of ‘fighting families,’ who might feel an individual pride in resenting every personality of the Opposition, and in identifying their own honour with the cause of Government. This dinner was sumptuous; the champagne and Madeira had their full effect; no man could be more condescending than the noble host. After due preparation, the point was skilfully introduced by Sir John Blaquiere (since created Lord de Blaquiere), who, of all men, was best calculated to promote a gentlemanly, convivial, fighting conspiracy; he was of the old school, an able diplomatist, and with the most polished manners and imposing address, he combined a friendly heart and decided spirit; in polite conviviality he was unrivalled.

“Having sent round many loyal, mingled with joyous and exhilarating, toasts, he stated that he understood the Opposition were disposed to personal unkindness,

\* It must be remembered that the compensation fund of £1,500,000 represents a small part of the bribery. Vast sums were also paid for votes out of the Secret Service money. O’Connell, in his Corporation Speech, estimates these latter bribes at “more than a million.” Then there were about forty new peerages created, and conferred as bribes. The tariff of prices for Union votes was familiarly known—£3,000, or an office worth £2,000 a year if the member did not like to touch the ready-money. Ten bishoprics, one chief-justiceship, six puisne-judgeships, besides regiments and ships given to officers of the army and navy. On the whole, the amount of all this in money must have been, at least, *five millions sterling*—£5,000,000. If bribery upon the same scale, say £100,000,000, were now judiciously administered in the English Parliament, a majority could be obtained which would annex the Three Kingdoms to the United States.

or even incivilities, towards His Majesty’s best friends—the Unionists of Ireland. He was determined that no man should advance upon him by degrading the party he had adopted, and the measures he was pledged to support. A full bumper proved his sincerity, the subject was discussed with great glee, and some of the company began to feel a zeal for ‘actual service.’

“Lord Castlereagh affected some coquetry, lest this idea should appear to have originated with him; but, when he perceived that many had made up their minds to act even on the offensive, he calmly observed that some mode should, at all events, be taken to secure the constant presence of a sufficient number of the Government friends during the discussion, as subjects of the utmost importance were often totally lost for want of due attendance. Never did a sleight-of-hand man juggle more expertly.

“One of his lordship’s prepared accessories (as if it were a new thought) proposed, humorously, to have a dinner for twenty or thirty, every day, in one of the committee-chambers, where they could be always at hand to make up a House, or for any *emergency* which should call for an unexpected reinforcement during any part of the discussion.

“The novel idea of such a detachment of legislators was considered whimsical and humorous, and, of course, was not rejected. Wit and puns began to accompany the bottle. Mr. Cooke, the Secretary, then, with significant nods and smirking inuendoes, began to circulate his official rewards to the company. The hints and the claret united to raise visions of the most gratifying nature, every man became in a prosperous state of official pregnancy—embryo judges, counsel to boards, envoys to foreign courts, compensation pensioners, placemen and commissioners in assortments, all revelled in the anticipation of something *substantial* to be given to every member who would do the Secretary the honour of accepting it.

“The scheme was unanimously adopted, Sir John Blaquiere pleasantly observed that, at all events, they would be sure of a good *cook* at their dinners. After much wit, and many flashes of convivial bravery, the meeting separated after midnight, fully resolved to eat, drink, speak, and *fight* for Lord Castlereagh.”

It was not long before one of these gentlemen found an opportunity of proving his mettle.

On the 15th of January the last session or the Parliament of Ireland assembled.



Every member expected that the speech from the Throne would have again introduced the subject of an Union, the basis for which was now firmly laid by the action of the British Parliament in adopting the *Articles of Union*. There was deep and expectant attention, as the Viceroy congratulated Parliament upon "victories of the combined imperial armies" over France; upon good understanding with Naples; upon the failure of the plans of "the enemy" in India; upon the check given to Buonaparte's Egyptian successes; and he went on to demand supplies as usual, and to promise economy;—and earnestly recommended to their care and patronage agriculture, manufactures, and the "Protestant Charter Schools;" but he ended without saying one word of *Union*.

Lord Viscount Loftus (afterwards Marquis of Ely) moved the address, which was as vague as the speech was empty. It was this gentleman's father, Marquis of Ely, who had been promised £45,000 for his three boroughs. Sir Jonah Barrington says this young nobleman "had been christened *Lee-boo* by the humorous party of the House, and was only selected to show the Commons that his father had been purchased,"—in other words, *pour encourager les autres*.

There was not a point in the Viceroy's speech intended to be debated. Lord Castlereagh, having judiciously collected his flock, was better enabled to decide on numbers, and to count with sufficient certainty on the result of his labours since the preceding session, without any hasty or premature disclosure of his definitive measure.

This negative and insidious mode of proceeding, however, could not be permitted by the Opposition, and Sir Lawrence Parsons, after one of the most able and luminous speeches he had ever uttered, moved an amendment, declaratory of the resolution of Parliament to preserve the constitution as established in 1782, and to support the freedom and independence of the nation. This motion occasioned a warm debate on the very first day of the session. Lord Castlereagh, in pursuance of the bullying policy which had been agreed upon, spoke contemptuously of the arguments of Sir Lawrence. The silence of the Lord-Lieutenant on the subject did not arise from any conviction of the impolicy of prosecuting the scheme. The question had been withdrawn when the House of Commons seemed unwilling to entertain it, but, as a great majority of the people now approved the measure, and as there was reason to believe that many

of its late Parliamentary opponents had renounced their ideas of its demerits, his Majesty's counsellors had resolved to give it a new chance of regular investigation. The reason of its not having been mentioned in the Viceroy's speech was merely that it was to be made a subject of distinct communication to Parliament.

There ensued a vehement debate on the whole question of Union. Many members now ventured to show their hands. After Mr. Ponsonby had spoken strongly and earnestly in favour of Sir L. Parsons' amendment, up rose Dr. Brown, member for the University, who had voted against the Union in the preceding session. He said "he had become more inclined to the Union than he had been in the preceding session, because he thought it more necessary, from *intermediate circumstances*." Unhappily, we know what those circumstances were. He had been promised the place of Prime-Sergeant, and got it for his vote, and for that alone, as he had no other merit.\*

Charles Kendal Bushe made a vigorous speech in this debate. He said:—

"You are called upon to give up your independence, and to whom are you to give it up? To a nation which for six hundred years has treated you with uniform oppression and injustice. The Treasury Bench startles at the assertion—*Non meus hic sermo est*. If the Treasury Bench scold me, Mr. Pitt will scold them; it is his assertion, in so many words, in his speech. *Ireland*, says he, *has always been treated with injustice and illiberality*. Ireland, says Junius, has been uniformly plundered and oppressed. This is not the slander of Junius, or the candour of Mr. Pitt; it is history. For centuries has the British nation and Parliament kept you down, shackled your commerce, paralyzed your exertions, despised your character, and ridiculed your pretensions to any privileges, commercial or constitutional. She never conceded a point to you which she could avoid, or granted a favour which was not reluctantly distilled. They have been all wrung from her like drops of her heart's blood, and you are not in possession of a single blessing, except those which you derive from God, that has not been either purchased or extorted by the virtue of your own Parliament from the illiberality of England."

Mr. Plunket also had spoken with his usual force against the project of Union, when Mr. St. George Daly, a very third-rate barrister, who had been appointed Prime-Sergeant on the dismissal of Mr. Fitzgerald, rose and began to put in

\* This gentleman was by birth an American.



practice the bullying policy which had been settled upon at Lord Castlereagh's. "He was a gentleman," says Sir Jonah Barrington, "of excellent family, and, what was formerly highly esteemed in Ireland, of a 'fighting family.' He was proud enough for his pretensions, and sufficiently conceited for his capacities, and a private gentleman he would have remained had not Lord Castlereagh and the Union placed him in public situations where he had himself too much sense not to feel that he certainly was over-elevated." This Mr. Daly ventured upon the system of personal insolence. Barrington describes the scene:—"Mr. Daly's attack on Mr. Bushe was of a clever description, and had Mr. Bushe had one vulnerable point, his assailant might have prevailed. He next attacked Mr. Plunket, who sat immediately before him; but the materials of his vocabulary had been nearly exhausted: however, he was making some progress, when the keen visage of Mr. Plunket was seen to assume a curled sneer, which, like a legion offensive and defensive, was prepared for an enemy. No speech could equal his glance of contempt and ridicule. Mr. Daly received it like an arrow, it pierced him, he faltered like a wounded man, his vocal infirmity became more manifest, and after an embarrassed pause, he yielded, changed his ground, and attacked by wholesale every member of his own profession who had opposed an union, and termed them a disaffected and dangerous faction."

But the House had nearly wearied itself out, and exhausted the subject, when, about seven o'clock in the morning, a sudden apparition broke upon the House, which caused men to hold their breath for a time. It was the entrance of Henry Grattan. Since his "secession" from Parliament more than two years before, along with Curran, Fitzgerald, and others, Grattan had been an invalid, trying to recruit his shattered constitution by change of scene and climate. He had spent some time in the mild air of the Isle of Wight, then among the mountains of Wales, and had but lately returned to his house of Tinnehinch, near Bray, when this momentous session of Parliament opened.

At that time Mr. Tighe returned the members for the close borough of Wicklow, and a vacancy having occurred, it was tendered to Mr. Grattan, who would willingly have declined it but for the importunities of his friends.

The Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Castlereagh, justly appreciating the effect his presence might have on the first debate, had withheld the writ of election till the

last moment the law allowed, and till they conceived it might be too late to return Mr. Grattan in time for the discussion. It was not until the day of the meeting of Parliament that the writ was delivered to the returning officer. By extraordinary exertions, and perhaps by following the example of Government in overstraining the law, the election was held immediately on the arrival of the writ, a sufficient number of voters were collected to return Mr. Grattan before midnight. By one o'clock the return was on its road to Dublin; it arrived by five; a party of Mr. Grattan's friends repaired to the private house of the proper officer, and making him get out of bed, compelled him to present the writ to Parliament before seven in the morning, when the House was in warm debate on the Union. A whisper ran through every party that Mr. Grattan was elected, and would immediately take his seat. The Ministerialists smiled with incredulous derision, and the Opposition thought the news too good to be true.

Mr. Egan was speaking strongly against the measure, when Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. Arthur Moore (afterwards Judge of the Common Pleas) walked out, and immediately returned leading, or rather helping, Mr. Grattan, in a state of total feebleness and debility. The effect was electric. Mr. Grattan's illness and deep chagrin had reduced a form, never symmetrical, and a visage at all times thin, nearly to the appearance of a spectre. As he feebly tottered into the House every member simultaneously rose from his seat. He moved slowly to the table; his languid countenance seemed to revive as he took those oaths that restored him to his pre-eminent station; the smile of inward satisfaction obviously illuminated his features, and reanimation and energy seemed to kindle by the labour of his mind. The House was silent, Mr. Egan did not resume his speech, Mr. Grattan, almost breathless, attempted to rise, but found himself unable at first to stand, and asked permission to address the House from his seat. Never was a finer illustration of the sovereignty of mind over matter. Grattan spoke two hours with all his usual vehemence and fire, against the Union, and in favour of the amendment of Sir Lawrence Parsons. The Treasury Bench was at first disquieted, then became savage; and it was resolved to bully or to kill Mr. Grattan. Sir Jonah Barrington describes the scene:—

"He had concluded, and the question was loudly called for, when Lord Castlereagh was perceived earnestly to whisper



to Mr. Corry. They for an instant looked round the House, whispered again, Mr. Corry nodded assent, and amidst the cries of 'question,' began a speech which, as far as it regarded Mr. Grattan, few persons in the House could have prevailed upon themselves to utter. Lord Castlereagh was not clear what impression Mr. Grattan's speech might have made upon a few hesitating members; he had, in the course of the debate, moved the question of adjournment; he did not like to meet Sir Lawrence Parsons on his motion; and Mr. Corry commenced certainly an able, but, towards Mr. Grattan, an ungenerous and unfeeling personal assault."

For that time the Castle bravo carried the matter with a high hand; the exhausted invalid was too feeble to attend to him—perhaps, did not even hear him. At ten o'clock in the morning a division was called for. Ninety-six voted for the amendment of Sir Lawrence Parsons; one hundred and thirty-eight against it—a majority of forty-two for the Castle. This majority of forty-two exceeded the warmest expectations of Government; and the Viceroy hoped to increase it by allowing an interval of some weeks to pass before he sent to either House a copy of the resolutions of the Parliament of Great Britain.

The defeat of the Anti-Unionists by a majority of forty-two, flushed the Minister with confidence. The members were now so far marshalled into their ranks, that considerable changes or conversions were not to be expected on either side. Some solitary instances of conversions did appear. A hot and open canvass was carried on in the House itself by the friends of Government, wherever an uncertain or reluctant member was observed, or his convictions, interests, and aspirations could be discovered. What effect attended this canvass is seen in the subsequent divisions, and in the Black List.

It was on the 15th of February that Lord Castlereagh, for the first time, formally brought the project of Union before the House, by reading a message from Lord Cornwallis, recommending that measure to the earnest attention of Parliament. His lordship then delivered a long speech, setting forth the several articles of Union, as agreed upon by the British Houses. He affirmed, without scruple, that public opinion was now favourable to Union. With regard to the multitudinously-signed petitions which had poured in against it, he remarked:—

"That had also been the case in the Scottish Union. The table of the Parliament was, day after day, for the space of three months, covered with such peti-

tions; but the Scottish legislators acted as, he trusted, the Irish Parliament would act; they considered only the public advantage; and, steadily pursuing that object, neither misled by artifices nor intimidated by tumult, they received, in the gratitude of their country, that reward which amply compensated their arduous labours in the great work so happily accomplished."\*

As to the principle of the measure—the competency of the Parliament of Ireland to extinguish itself—his lordship affirmed that this had been so firmly established by a speech, that of Mr. Smith, which had been published, "that he considered it as placed beyond question or doubt." He then described the articles in succession. He attempted to show that the contemplated financial arrangement, making the two countries bear separately the charge of their respective debts, and requiring Ireland to pay in the proportion of one to seven and a half, towards the general expenses of the United Kingdom, for twenty years—the proportions to be afterwards modified according to the respective abilities of the two countries—was an arrangement by which Ireland would *save a million per annum*. The proposed commercial regulations also he discussed, most elaborately, and showed to the satisfaction of his friends, that in this article also, Ireland would be the gainer. His lordship then spoke of the article to consolidate the Church of England and Church of Ireland. In this place he took care to introduce the regular ministerial phrase, intended to comfort the Catholics:—

"The cause of distrust must vanish with the removal of weakness; strength and confidence would produce liberality; and the claims of the Catholics *might be temperately discussed and impartially decided* before an Imperial Parliament, divested of those local circumstances which would ever produce irritation and jealousy."

With respect to the composition of the United Parliament, his lordship observed that, while the population of Great Britain exceeded ten millions, that of Ireland was only three million five hundred thousand or four millions;† and while Ireland's

\* The reader will recollect that the Scottish Union also was accomplished by purchasing a majority with money and office.

† It was at least five millions. Mr. Plowden, though he does not like to contradict Lord Castlereagh, says, "there are many strong reasons for believing that it amounted to near five millions. Six years later, it was five million three hundred and ninety-five thousand four hundred and fifty-six, according to the estimate for that year (1805), given in the official Irish Directory. But as there was then no census, Lord Castlereagh felt himself at liberty to give his own estimate."



share in the general expenses of the empire was to be only one, against Great Britain's seven and a half, she was to have a hundred members in the Imperial Parliament.

Lord Castlereagh next approached the delicate question—What was to be done with the Irish Peerages? According to the Articles of Union, Irish Peers were not to sit in any House of Lords by their own right; yet they were not to be altogether degraded to Commoners, which would have been republican, and savouring of “French principles.” So the awkward compromise which was adopted caused his lordship some trouble to explain, in a plausible manner. They were to be *represented* in the Imperial House of Lords by four spiritual Peers, elected by their order, and twenty-eight temporal Peers, elected by theirs, and holding their seats for life. Peers of Ireland were to be capable of holding seats in the House of Commons, but not for an Irish constituency; only for a county or borough in England.

In describing the apportionment of the representation between counties and boroughs, giving sixty-four to the former and thirty-six to the latter, his lordship said this would necessarily disfranchise many boroughs; and here he took occasion formally to promise “compensation,” not to the disfranchised electors, but to the landed proprietors who were the “patrons” of those boroughs, and were supposed to own the franchise of those electors. This intended purchase of the “pocket boroughs,” and the immense prices to be paid for them, had been known before; but this was the first time the stupendous bribe had been mentioned in Parliament. Lord Castlereagh coolly said:—

“As the disfranchisement of many boroughs would diminish the influence and privileges of those gentlemen whose property was connected with such places of election, he endeavoured to obviate their complaints by promising that, if the plan submitted to the House should be finally approved, he would offer some measure of compensation to those individuals whose peculiar interests should suffer in the arrangement.

“Much and deep objection might be stated to such a measure; but it surely was consonant with the privileges of private justice; it was calculated to meet the feelings of the moderate; and it was better to resort to such a measure, however objectionable, than adhere to the present system, and keep afloat for ever the dangerous question of Parliamentary

reform. If this were a measure of purchase, it should be recollected that it would be the purchase of peace, and the expense of it would be redeemed *by one year's saving of the Union.*”

Lord Castlereagh did not feel it necessary to mention any of the other classes of bribes which were to reward those patriots who would consent to enrich Ireland by all these gains and savings. He knew that the faithful Mr. Cooke was arranging those matters of business in the lobbies, in the corridors, on the very floor of the House.

Mr. George Ponsonby made a violent attack upon the Minister and his whole scheme. He treated as visionary all the proffered advantages of Union. In the ecclesiastical establishment Union would produce but one solid effect, which would be to translate the Irish into English bishops.

He then summed up the effects of the Union in these terms:—“Your peerage is to be disgraced, your Commons purchased; no additional advantage in commerce; for twenty years a little saving in contributions, but if the Cabinet of England think that we contribute more than we should, why not correct that extravagance now? If anything should be conceded in the way of trade, why is it not conceded now? Are any of those benefits incompatible with our present state? No! but the Minister wants to carry his union; and no favour, however trifling, can be yielded to us, unless we are willing to purchase it with the existence of Parliament and the liberties of the country.”

Sir John Parnell, Mr. Dobbs, Mr. Saunderson, Mr. Peter Burrowes, all attacked the measure, and exposed the fallacies of Lord Castlereagh; and amongst the opponents of the Minister, we still find the name of John Claudius Beresford, of the “Riding-House,” Grand Secretary of the Orangemen. His time for being converted had not yet come.

Mr. Grattan spoke at considerable length. He said, “In this proposition, the Minister had gigantic difficulties to encounter. It was incumbent upon him to explain away the tyrannical acts of a century; to apologize for the lawless and oppressive proceedings of England, for a system which had counteracted the kindness of Providence towards Ireland, and had kept her in a state of thralldom and misery; to prove that the British Parliament had undergone a great change of disposition; to disprove two consequences which were portended by the odium of the Union, and the increased expenses of



the empire—namely, a military government for a considerable time, and at no very distant period an augmentation of taxes; to deny or dispute the growth of the prosperity of Ireland under the maternal wing of her own Parliament; to controvert the sufficiency of that Legislature for imperial purposes or commercial objects, though facts were against him; and to explode or recall his repeated declarations in its favour. In short, he had to prove many points which he could by no means demonstrate, and to disprove many which might be forcibly maintained against him. It was, moreover, singular to behold the man who denied the right of France to alter her government, maintaining the omnipotence of the Parliament of Ireland to annul her Constitution."

He then urged the very serious importance of the question. It was not such as had formerly occupied their attention; not old Poynings, not peculation, nor an embargo, not a Catholic Bill—not a Reform Bill. It was their being; it was more, it was their life to come, whether they would go to the tomb of Charlemont and the volunteers, and erase his epitaph, or whether their children should go to their graves, saying, "A venal, a military court attacked the liberties of the Irish, and here lie the bones of the honourable men who saved their country." Such an epitaph was a nobility which the king could not give to his slaves—it was a glory which the Crown could not give to the king.

On a division there appeared for the printing of the Articles one hundred and fifty-eight; against it, one hundred and fifteen; giving the Minister a majority of forty-three.\*

Even the staunch Unionist, Mr. Plowden, is honest enough to say on this occasion:—

"When the number of the placemen, pensioners, and other influenced members who had voted on the late division is considered, the Minister had but slender grounds for triumphing in his majority of forty-three, if from them were to be collected the genuine sense of the independent part of that House, and of the people of Ireland, whom they represented."

And he adds in a note:—

"Many, it is to be feared, in both Houses, sacrificed their convictions. Twenty-seven new titles were added to the Peerage; promotions, grants, concessions, arrangements, promises, were lavished

with a profusion never before known in that country. Pity for both sides that so great and important a political measure should owe any part of its success to other than the means of temperate reason and persuasion."

Triumphantly Lord Castlereagh sent up his Articles to the Lords, where Lord Clare was ready for his part of the work. It was on this occasion that he made that long and able discourse which has been so often reprinted, and from which many extracts have been already given in these pages. Great part of it consists of a historical disquisition upon the whole career of the English colony: its connection on one hand with the mass of the Irish nation, and on the other with the English Crown and Parliament; and whilst it contains many truths powerfully expressed, the general effect of the whole is to traduce all the classes, sects, and parties of Ireland for several centuries. Grattan afterwards wrote an answer to this speech, charging the Chancellor with many deliberate misrepresentations and falsehoods. "His idea," said Mr. Grattan, "was to make the Irish history a calumny against their ancestors, in order to disfranchise their posterity."

The measure was opposed in the House of Peers by the Earl of Charlemont, the Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Bellamont, Lord Powerscourt, Lord Dillon, and others, supported by Lord Glentworth, Lord Glendore, and the Archbishop of Cashel. However, on the first division there was a large majority for the Government—seventy-five for, and twenty-six against. The general principles of the Union were thus propounded and accepted in both Houses of the Irish Legislature.

In the next debate in the House of Commons the Honourable Isaac Corry, who seemed to have taken special charge of replying to Mr. Grattan, again made a coarse personal attack on that gentleman. Grattan replied with such studied and contemptuous insult as to throw upon Mr. Corry the *onus* of resentment.

The House saw the inevitable consequences. The Speaker (the House was in Committee) sent for Mr. Grattan into his chamber, and pressed his interposition for an amicable adjustment, which Mr. Grattan positively refused, saying, he saw, and had been for some time aware of, a set made at him, to *pistol him off* on that question; therefore it was as well that the experiment were tried then as at any other time. Both parties instantly left the House upon Mr. Grattan's finish-

\* For the Articles of Union at full length, see Appendix No. I.



ing his philippic. They met without delay in a field on the Ball's Bridge Road, and after an exchange of two shots, Mr. Corry received a wound in the hand. So the affair ended. The populace, amongst whom the certainty of a duel was noised abroad, followed the parties to the ground; and there was reason to fear that if Mr. Grattan had fallen, his antagonist would have been sacrificed on the spot.

On the 21st of February Lord Castlereagh took his next step. This was to move the adoption in the Commons of the Articles, one by one. It is unnecessary to analyze the speeches made at the various debates which intervened before the final scene of the Irish Parliament. They generally dealt with the same facts and the same principles; but on one of these occasions there were two efforts to obtain at least some delay in the remorseless progress of the Minister. On the 4th of March Mr. G. Ponsonby, alleging that the Sovereign would not have persisted in recommending the present measure unless he had firmly believed that the sentiments of the public on the subject had undergone a great change, urged the House to remove so injurious a delusion by an intimation of the truth. A knowledge of the number of Anti-Union petitions would, he said, correct that error; and he therefore proposed an address, stating that, in conformity with the constitutional rights of the people, petitions against a Legislative Union had been presented to the Parliament from twenty-six counties, and from various cities and towns.

The reply of Lord Castlereagh to this moderate proposal was highly characteristic. He contented himself with *affirming* that the public opinion had really undergone a change friendly to the measure, and that seventy-four declarations, nineteen of which were those of counties, had been presented in its favour. *Even if this were not the case*, he would oppose a motion which derogated from the deliberative power of Parliament, and *tended to encourage a popular interference* pregnant in these critical times with danger and alarm.

In another debate Mr. Speaker Foster took occasion to point out and denounce the manifest object of the Government in their Article relating to the Irish peerage. He said it created a sort of mongrel peer, half lord, half commoner, neither the one nor the other complete, and yet enough of each to remind you of the motley mixture. It would depress the spirit and enervate the exertions of all the rising nobility of the

land. Further, by a strange sort of absurdity, the measure, in suffering a peer, as a commoner, to take a British seat, and refusing to allow him an Irish one, admitted this monstrous position, that in the country where his property, his connections, and residence were, he should not be chosen a legislator, but where he was wholly a stranger he might. The certain consequence of which was that it would induce a residence of the Irish nobility in Britain, where they might be elected commoners, and must, of course, solicit interest; thereby increasing the number of Irish absentees, and gradually weaning the men of largest fortune from an acquaintance or a connection with their native country.

Mr. Saurin and Sir John Parnell then severally proposed an appeal to the people, by a dissolution of Parliament; but this project was scouted by the triumphant Castle party. If that present Parliament, they argued, had no power to do the deed, neither would any other. Besides, that very Parliament was already bought up by the Castle; and the Castle would have value for its money, or rather the nation's money—for the peculiar and exquisite villany of this transaction was, that the people of Ireland were to pay the purchase-money of their own sale to their enemies.

While these last struggles of a perishing nation were taking place within the walls of Parliament, there was deep gloom hanging over Dublin and the country. The Houses were now always surrounded by military, judiciously posted in College Green, Dame and Westmoreland Streets, ostensibly to keep the peace, but really to strike terror, and prevent any manifestation of popular feeling by the fear of a sudden onslaught. Lord Castlereagh also threatened to remove the Parliament to Cork, if its proceedings were at all troubled by the populace. Unfortunately, the Anti-Unionists had no efficient organization, and no acknowledged leader. "Conversions" to Unionism were every day taking place, through the earnest persuasions of Mr. Cooke. Some of the cheated and deluded Catholic Bishops began to send addresses to the Castle favourable to the Union. Bishop Lanigan, of Kilkenny, and his clergy, addressed Lord Cornwallis in this sense: a proceeding which bitterly hurt and grieved the mass of the Catholic laity, although in the address itself occurred a ludicrous application of a phrase, which made the people laugh, as they are at all times willing to do. One of his Excellency's eyes, by some natural defect, appeared



considerably diminished, and, like the pendulum of a clock, was generally in a state of *motion*. The Right Reverend Bishop and clergy having never before seen the Marquis, unfortunately commenced their address with the most *mal à propos* exordium of—"Your Excellency has always kept a *steady eye* on the interests of Ireland." The address was presented at levee. His Excellency, however, was graciously pleased not to return any answer to that part of their compliment.

It must be admitted, in justice to the Catholic Bishops, that they were really deceived by the continual representations of Ministers; and, indeed, we may be sure that in private conference with Archbishop Troy, Lord Cornwallis did not confine himself to the stereotyped formula always repeated in Parliament, with regard to the claims of the Catholics, but plainly promised that Catholic Emancipation would be immediately made a Cabinet question.\* However that may

\* Mr. Plowden, who could not think of supposing that British Ministers did not mean what they said, gives what he considers a clear proof of their sincerity and devotion to the cause of the Catholics:—

"That the British Ministers were *sincere in their intentions* of bringing forward, and confident in their expectations of carrying, the question of Catholic Emancipation in an Imperial Parliament, is manifest from certain written communications made by them to some of the leading persons of the Catholic body, about the time of their retiring from office, which were to the following effect:—

"The leading part of His Majesty's Ministers, finding insurmountable obstacles to the bringing forward measures of concession to the Catholic body, whilst in office, have felt it impossible to continue in administration under the inability to propose it with the circumstances necessary to carrying the measure with all its advantages, and they have retired from His Majesty's service, considering this line of conduct as most likely to contribute to its ultimate success: The Catholic body will therefore see how much their future hopes must depend upon strengthening their cause by good conduct in the meantime. They will prudently consider their prospects as arising from the persons who now espouse their interests, and compare them with those which they could look to from any other quarter. They may with confidence rely on the zealous support of all those who retire, and of many who remain in office, when it can be given with a prospect of success. They may be assured that Mr. Pitt will do his utmost to establish their cause in the public favour, and prepare the way for their finally attaining their objects; and the Catholics will feel that, as Mr. Pitt could not concur in a hopeless attempt to force it now, he must at all times repress, with the same decision as if he held an adverse opinion, any unconstitutional conduct in the Catholic body.

"Under these circumstances, it cannot be doubted that the Catholics will take the most loyal, dutiful, and patient line of conduct; that they will not suffer themselves to be led into measures which can, by any construction, give a handle to the opposers of their wishes, either to misinterpret their principles or to raise an argument for resisting their claims; but that by their prudent and exemplary demeanour they will afford additional grounds to the growing number of their advocates to enforce their claims on proper occa-

be, it is certain that the friends of independence, while they were struggling against the Union in Parliament, were discouraged on finding their efforts not only not appreciated, but actually thwarted by certain of the Catholic prelates who exercised necessarily so large an influence in the country.

Thus all was gloom and despondency, while the several "Articles" were separately argued and assented to. This was finished on the 22d of March.

A message was then sent to the House of Lords, importing that the Commons had agreed to the Articles of the Union; and on the 27th the Peers intimated to the other House, that they had adopted them with some alterations and additions. Two amendments had been proposed by the Earl of Clare, and adopted, importing that on the extinction of three Irish peerages, one might be created, till the number should be reduced to one hundred, and afterwards one for every failure; and that the qualifications of the Irish for the Imperial Parliament should be the same in point of property with those of the British members. These amendments were readily approved by the Commons; and Lord Castlereagh immediately proposed an address to His Majesty, in which both Houses concurred. In this address they declared that they cordially embraced the principle of incorporating Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, by a complete and entire union of their Legislatures; that they considered the resolutions of the British Parliament

sions, until their objects can be finally and advantageously attained.

"*The Sentiments of a Sincere Friend (i. e., Marquis Cornwallis) to the Catholic Claims.*

"If the Catholics should now proceed to violence, or entertain any ideas of gaining their object by convulsive measures, or forming associations with men of Jacobinical principles, they must, of course, lose the support and aid of those who have sacrificed their own situations in their cause, but who would, at the same time, feel it to be their indispensable duty to oppose everything tending to confusion.

"On the other hand, should the Catholics be sensible of the benefit they possess by having so many characters of eminence pledged not to embark in the service of Government, except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being obtained, it is to be hoped that, on balancing the advantages and disadvantages of their situation, they would prefer a quiet and peaceable demeanour to any line of conduct of an opposite description."

"The originals of these two declarations were handed to Dr. Troy, and afterwards to Lord Fingall on the same day, by Marquis Cornwallis, in the presence of Lieutenant-Colonel Littlehales, in the beginning of May, 1801, shortly before his departure from the Government of Ireland, and before the arrival of Lord Hardwicke, his successor. His Excellency desired they should be *discreetly communicated to the Bishops and principal Catholics, but not inserted in the newspapers.*"



as wisely calculated to form the basis of such a settlement; that by those propositions they had been guided in their proceedings; and that the resolutions now offered were those Articles which, if approved by the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, they were ready to confirm and ratify, in order that the same might be established for ever by the mutual consent of both Parliaments.

At this stage of the business, the matter rested in Ireland; and the British Parliament had next to do its part—a matter which might be supposed somewhat doubtful, if all the advantages of the proposed Union were to be, as Lord Castlereagh said, on the side of Ireland; but we shall find that this consideration did not act upon the Lords and Commons of England.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

1800.

The Union in English Parliament—Opposed by Lord Holland—Mr. Grey—Sheridan—Irish Act for Electors—Distribution of Seats—Castlereagh brings in Bill for the Union—Warm Debates—Union denounced by Plunket, Bushe, Saurin, Grattan—Their Earnest Language—Last Days of the Parliament—Last Scene—Passes the Lords—The Protesting Peers—The Compensation Act—The King Congratulates the British Parliament—Lord Cornwallis—The Irish—Union to date from January 1, 1801—Irish Debt—History of it.

IN the Parliament of England there was no danger that any time would be lost. The Articles of Union passed through the Irish Parliament as they had been originally framed by the British Ministry, having received no other alterations in their progress than such as were dictated by the Court. They were now brought forward as terms proposed by the Lords and Commons of Ireland, in the form of resolutions; and on April 2, 1800, the Duke of Portland communicated to the House of Lords a message from the King, and at the same time presented to them, as documents, a copy of the Irish address, with the resolutions.

Lord Holland in vain opposed the appointment of a committee; he objected to the whole project of Union. "It was evidently offensive to the great body of the Irish; and, if it should be carried into effect against the sense of the people, it would endanger the connection between the countries, and might produce irreparable mischief. He should oppose the motion for a committee."

All remonstrance was useless. Ministers felt that their arrangements were perfect, and the result sure; they would never, perhaps, hold Ireland so thoroughly in hand as they held her now—thanks to Lord Castlereagh.

On a division, only three Peers (the Earl of Derby, and the Lords Holland and King) voted against, and eighty-two supported the motion for going into a committee. The first three Articles were then proposed to the committee, and received the assent of the Peers.

The motion for a committee was made in the House of Commons by Mr. Pitt. On the House resolving itself into a committee, Mr. Pitt entered at great length into the whole question, going in general over the same well-beaten ground. In closing his speech, this Minister (knowing well the system of management of the Irish Parliament—and knowing, also, that everybody else knew it) was not ashamed to say:—

"The ample discussion which every part of this subject has met with (so ample that nothing like its deliberation was ever known before in any Legislature) has silenced clamour, has rooted out prejudice, has *overruled objections*, has *answered all argument*, has *refuted all cavils*, and *caused the plan to be entirely esteemed*. Both branches of the Legislature, after long discussion, mature deliberation, and laborious inquiry, have expressed themselves clearly and decidedly in its favour. The opinion of the people, who, from their means of information, were most likely, because best enabled to form a correct judgment, is decidedly in its favour."

Mr. Grey (afterwards Lord Grey) still opposed the Union. Referring to Mr. Pitt's last assertions, he permitted himself to doubt their accuracy:—

"It was said that the public voice was in its favour, after a fair appeal to the unbiassed sense of the nation. Nineteen counties were said to have signified a wish for its adoption; and he believed that addresses had really been presented from that number of shires; but by whom they were signed he did not exactly know, though it had been understood they were procured at meetings not regularly convened, and promoted by the personal exertions of a governor who, to the powerful influence of the Crown, added the terrors of martial law. To speak of the uncontrolled opinion of the community in such a case, reminded him of the Duke of Buckingham's account to Richard III. of the manner in which the citizens of London had agreed to his claim of the Crown—



'Some followers of mine own  
At lowest end o' the hall hurl'd up their caps,  
And some ten voices cried, God save King  
Richard!  
And thus I took the 'vantage of those few—  
Thanks, gentle citizens and friends, quoth I;  
This general applause and cheerful shout  
Argues your wisdom and your love to Richard.'"

Mr. Grey proceeded further. He indignantly exposed a portion of the infamies then perpetrated in Ireland; and in such a manner as to show that he had fully informed himself. He said:—

"He did not mean to speak disrespectfully of the Irish Parliament. But the facts were notorious. There are three hundred members in all, and one hundred and twenty of these strenuously opposed the measure; among whom were two-thirds of the county members, the representatives of the city of Dublin, and almost all the towns which it is proposed shall send members to the Imperial Parliament. One hundred and sixty-two voted in favour of the Union—of those, one hundred and sixteen were placemen, some of them were English Generals on the Staff, without one foot of ground in Ireland, and completely dependent upon Government. Is there any ground, then, to presume that even the Parliament of Ireland thinks as the right honourable gentleman supposes; or that, acting only from a regard to the good of their country, the members would not have reprobated the measure as strongly and unanimously as the rest of the people? But this is not all. Let us reflect upon the arts which have been used since the last session of the Irish Parliament, to pack a majority in the House of Commons. All holding offices under Government, even the most intimate friends of the Minister, who had uniformly supported his administration till the present occasion, if they hesitated to vote as directed, were dismissed from office, and stripped of their employments. Even this step was found ineffectual, and other arts were had recourse to, *which I cannot name in this place*; all will easily conjecture. A bill for preserving the purity of Parliament was likewise abused, and no less than sixty-three seats were vacated by their holders having received nominal offices. I will not press this subject further upon the attention of the committee. I defy any man to lay his hand upon his heart and say, that he believes the Parliament of Ireland was sincerely in favour of the measure." Mr. Grey then moved an address to His Majesty, praying him to direct his Ministers to suspend all proceedings on the Union till the sentiments of the people of

Ireland respecting that measure should have been ascertained.

Mr. Sheridan, of course, was at his post, and supported the motion of Mr. Grey. He deprecated the prosecution of a measure which, if it should be carried into effect by corruption or violence, would become the fatal source of discontent and rebellion. That the Union had the general approbation and independent assent of the Irish nation, a number of addresses and declarations were mentioned as a proof; *but where were these addresses?* The addresses against it were easy to be found. Twenty-seven of the counties had openly declared against it; and with these would have united Antrim and Sligo, if martial law had not been proclaimed, and prevented the intended meetings. If the measure were thus to be carried, he had no hesitation in saying that it would be an act of tyranny and oppression, and must become the fatal source of new discontents and future rebellions; and the only standard round which the pride, the passions, and the prejudices of Irishmen would rally, would be that which would lead them to the recovery of a constitution that would have been thus foully and oppressively wrested from them. *No attempt had been made to deny the notorious fact*, that sixty-five seats had been vacated to make places for men whose obsequiousness would not permit them to oppose the measure; and it was equally notorious that no art or influence which the policy of corruption and intimidation could put in play had been left untried to gain over partizans to the Union.

It is, indeed, singular that in the course of these debates no Minister was hardy enough to deny the system of intimidation and bribery. Mr. Secretary Dundas contented himself on this occasion with saying "he would not admit" that the Irish in general dissented from the scheme. Lord Carysford boldly propounded a strange argument; he affirmed, that the Unionists in the Irish Parliament had a much greater extent of property than their adversaries, in the Lords ten to one, and that the judging portion of the people approved the project. Mr. Pitt, however, indignantly scouted the idea of appealing to a community so influenced by factious leaders; he was satisfied with the constitutional assent of Parliament.

In short, Mr. Grey's motion, to "suspend proceedings on the Union till the sentiments of the people of Ireland should be ascertained," was negatived by a vote of two hundred and thirty-six, against thirty.



And the first three Articles were adopted by the committee.

Other debates upon various parts of the Articles had uniformly the same result—vast majorities for the Minister. Two incidents only of these discussions merit notice.

On the 30th of April, a debate arose upon a motion of Lord Holland, tending to give the Catholics a pledge or prospect of the abolition of the disabilities to which they were still subject both in Ireland and Great Britain. This was opposed on the part of Government as “unseasonable.” Ministers, in fact, intended that the Catholic bishops and influential leaders should content themselves with the vague promises already so often mentioned. The Government was practically receiving support for their measure from many of those prelates and gentlemen, on the faith of the treacherous promises of Lord Cornwallis and his underlings; and had no idea of pledging the British Parliament to emancipation. Lord Grenville “was of opinion that these questions would be best determined by an United Parliament.” So the subject dropped.

The other incident arose from the alarm of the woollen manufacturers. It will be remembered how this class of manufacturers, in the reign of William III., had been able to procure express Acts of the English Parliament for the destruction of that kind of industry in Ireland, and to ensure to themselves the full monopoly of Irish wool in fleece. They were now very naturally of opinion that the commercial “Article” in the Articles of Union, permitting the free mutual import and export between the two islands, was a gross infringement upon their vested rights. They, accordingly, petitioned the House of Commons against the “Article.” Their demand was too monstrous, but it was sustained in the House by Mr. Peel and Mr. Wilberforce. Mr. Pitt, however, who knew that the English monopoly of the woollen manufacture was now practically safe enough, maintained that, if any transfer of manufacture should result from the permission of exporting wool, it would be gradual and inconsiderable; that any void which it might occasion would be much more than filled up by the great increase of our trade in this article; that we had no reason to apprehend a scarcity of the commodity, or dread the rivalry of the Irish in the manufacture; and that his friend’s proposal would be an unnecessary deviation from that liberal principle of a free intercourse which was the intended basis of the Union. The Article,

therefore, was adopted as it stood, to the deep indignation of the good people of Leeds and all Yorkshire.

All the Articles had been adopted before the 9th of May. A joint address was on that day presented to the King, importing that they were now ready to conclude an Union with the Irish Parliament upon the basis of the Articles. This address, in a tone which resembles a cold and solemn sneer, expresses the “unspeakable satisfaction” of Parliament at “the general conformity of the Articles transmitted from Ireland with those which they had voted in the preceding year.”

The next thing in order was that each Parliament was to frame the Articles into a bill, and so pass the *Act of Union*.

As an Irish Act for regulating elections was to be incorporated in the general bill of Union, Lord Castlereagh at once, in the Irish House of Commons, brought in that parliamentary measure. It passed the House of Commons on the 20th of May. This measure arranged the representation as it remained from the Union until the “Reform Act.” It gave one member of Parliament to each of the following towns:—

Waterford, Limerick, Belfast, Drogheda, Carrickfergus, Newry, Kilkenny, Londonderry, Galway, Clonmell, Wexford, Armagh, Youghall, Bandon, Dundalk, Kinsale, Lisburne, Sligo, Catherlogh, Ennis, Dungarvan, Down-Patrick, Coleraine, Mallow, Athlone, New-Ross, Tralee, Cashel, Dungannon, Portarlinton, and Enniskillen. One member for each of these towns, with four for Dublin and Cork, one for the University, and sixty-four representatives of the thirty-two counties.

The Act then made its singular provision to allow present Irish members of Parliament to sit in a Parliament they had never been elected to serve in. It provided that, if the King should authorize the present Lords and Commons of Great Britain to form a part of the first Imperial Legislature, the sitting members for Dublin and Cork, and for the thirty-two counties of Ireland, should represent the same cities and shires in that Parliament; that the written names of the members for the college of the Holy Trinity, for the cities of Waterford and Limerick, and the other towns before mentioned, should be put into a glass, and successively drawn out by the clerk of the Crown, and that, of the two representatives of each of those places, the individual whose name should be first drawn should serve for the same place in the first



United Legislature; and that, when a new Parliament should be convoked, writs should be sent to the Irish counties, to the University, and to the cities and boroughs above specified, for the election of members in the usual mode, according to the number then adjusted.

The Act also arranged the rotation in which the four Irish bishops should sit in the House of Peers, and also the election of the twenty-eight Irish Peers by their own order.

On the very next day—for Ministers were in hot haste—Castlereagh moved for leave to bring in his bill for the Legislative Union. Leave was given by a vote of one hundred and sixty against one hundred. It was at once presented, read, and ordered to be printed. On the 25th it was read again. The uncorrupted members of the House looked on with impotent indignation. Mr. Grattan proposed a delay until the 1st of August, to allow the measure to be more fully canvassed. He proceeded also to argue very warmly against the whole principle of it. He said it was “a breach of a solemn covenant, an innovation promoted by martial law, an unauthorized assumption of a competency to destroy the independence of the realm, an unjustifiable attempt to injure the prosperity of the country. The bill would be, *quoad* the constitution, equivalent to a murder, and, *quoad* the Government, to a separation. If it should be carried into effect, he foretold its want of permanence, and intimated his apprehensions that popular discontent, perhaps dangerous commotions, might result from its enforcement.”

Lord Castlereagh defended the bill, and censured the inflammatory language of Mr. Grattan. “But he defied,” he said, “their incentives to treason, and had no doubt of the energy of the Government in defending the Constitution against every attack.” Such was the insolent and half-menacing tone adopted upon system by the Administration.

Several earnest debates followed. The faithful representatives of the people, whom money, and place, and title could not buy, did their sad duty to the end. The ablest lawyers in the country, and some of the purest patriots of whom history makes mention, could at least protest against this parricide and suicide, and their solemn and well-weighed words of warning and exhortation, if they could not save the country for that time, remain on record as a protest, as a continual claim, and perpetual muniment of title, on behalf of the independence of the Irish nation. As several passages of these

Anti-Union pleadings have been often cited by Mr. O’Connell, and others, who have never ceased to demand the repeal of that evil Act, they have become classical, and must always be held an essential part of any history of Ireland.

William Conyngham Plunket, afterwards Lord Chancellor, said:—

“Sir, I, in the most express terms, deny the competency of Parliament to do this act. I warn you, do not dare to lay your hands upon the Constitution. I tell you that if, circumstanced as you are, you pass this Act, it will be a mere nullity, and no man in Ireland will be bound to obey it. I make the assertion deliberately. I repeat it. I call on any man who hears me to take down my words. You have not been elected for this purpose. You are appointed to make laws, and not legislatures. You are appointed to exercise the function of legislators, and not to transfer them.

“You are appointed to act under the Constitution, and not to alter it; and if you do so, your act is a dissolution of the Government—you resolve society into its original elements, and no man in the land is bound to obey you. Sir, I state doctrines that are not merely founded on the immutable laws of truth and reason. I state not merely the opinions of the ablest and wisest men who have written on the science of government, but I state the practice of our Constitution, as settled at the era of the Revolution; and I state the doctrine under which the House of Hanover derives its title to the Throne.

“For me, I do not hesitate to declare, that if the madness of the revolutionists were to tell me, ‘You must sacrifice British connection,’ I would adhere to that connection in preference to the independence of my country. *But I have as little hesitation in saying that, if the wanton ambition of a Minister should assail the freedom of Ireland, and compel me to the alternative, I would fling the connection to the winds, and clasp the independence of my country to my heart.*”

Mr. Bushe (subsequently Chief-Justice of Ireland), spoke these words:—

“I strip this formidable measure of all its pretensions and all its aggravations; I look on it nakedly and abstractedly, and I see nothing in it but one question, Will you give up the country? I forget for a moment the unprincipled means by which it has been promoted. I pass by for a moment the unseasonable time at which it has been introduced, and the contempt of Parliament upon which it is bottomed, and I look upon it simply as England



reclaiming in a moment of your weakness that dominion which you extorted from her in a moment of your virtue—a dominion which she uniformly abused, which invariably oppressed and impoverished you, and from the cessation of which *you date all your prosperity*. . . .

“Odious as this measure is in my eyes, and disgusting to my feelings, if I see it is carried by the free and uninfluenced sense of the Irish Parliament, I shall not only defer and submit, but I will cheerfully obey. It will be the first duty of every good subject. *But fraud, and oppression, and unconstitutional practice, may possibly be another question.* If this be factious language, Lord Somers was factious, the founders of the Revolution were factious, William III. was an usurper, and the Revolution was a rebellion.”

Mr. Saurin (subsequently a Privy Councillor and an Attorney-General) spoke these words:—

“You make the Union binding as a law, but you cannot make it obligatory on conscience. It will be obeyed so long as England is strong; but resistance to it will be in the abstract a duty; and the exhibition of that resistance will be a mere question of prudence.”

Mr. Grattan, who was afterwards deemed worthy of a resting-place in Westminster Abbey, spoke these words in the Irish House of Commons, in one of the debates on Union:—

“Many honourable gentlemen thought differently from me. I respect their opinions, but I keep my own; and I think now as I thought then, *that the treason of the Minister against the liberties of the people was infinitely worse than the rebellion of the people against the Minister*. . . .

“The cry of the connection (the Union measure) will not in the end avail against the principles of liberty. . . .

“The cry of disaffection will not in the end avail against the principle of liberty.

“Yet I do not give up the country. I see her in a swoon; but she is not dead. Though in her tomb she lies helpless and motionless, still there is on her lips a spirit of life, and on her cheek a glow of beauty.

“Thou art not conquered; beauty’s ensign yet is crimson on thy lips and in thy cheek, and death’s pale flag is not advanced there.”\*

\* It is true that several of these Anti-Union orators subsequently acted as if they had not been altogether sincere in so strongly denouncing the Union, pronouncing it a nullity, and proclaiming, as Lord Plunket and Mr. Saurin did, that no man would be bound to obey it—that is, to obey laws

Eloquence and constitutional law-learning were alike vain. The bill was hurried to its third reading; and when it was seen that the evil deed was inevitable, most of the Anti-Unionists rose and left the House, that they might not witness the division by which it was to be carried. This was on the 7th of June. There was, if we are to credit Sir Jonah Barrington, a certain theatrical solemnity in some of these last scenes of our national life. For example:—

“Before the third reading of the bill, when it was about to be reported, Mr. Charles Ball, member for Clogher, rose, and without speaking one word, looked round impressively—every eye was directed to him—he only pointed his hand significantly to the bar, and immediately walked forth, casting a parting look behind him, and turning his eyes to heaven, as if to invoke vengeance on the enemies of his country. His example was contagious. Those Anti-Unionists who were in the House immediately followed his example, and never returned into that Senate, which had been the glory, the guardian, and the protection of their country. There was but one scene more, and the curtain was to drop for ever.”

On these last days of the Irish Parliament there was an ostentatious display of military force. Troops were drawn up under the Ionic colonnades of the superb Parliament House; and the citizens of Dublin knew that batteries of field artillery were ready at convenient spots to sweep their streets at a moment’s notice—an arrangement to which they have been long accustomed. Sir Jonah, who was present and saw all, and who, though not in all respects an estimable man, at least stood by his country in this crisis to the last, describes the scene for us:—

“The day of extinguishing the liberties of Ireland had now arrived, and the sun took his last view of independent Ireland; he rose no more over a proud and prosperous nation. She was now condemned by the British Minister to renounce her rank amongst the States of Europe. She was sentenced to cancel her Constitution, to disband her Commons, and disfranchise her nobility, to proclaim her incapacity, and register her corruption in the records of the empire.

“The Commons House of Parliament, on the last evening, afforded the most melancholy example of a fine, indepen-

enacted in the Imperial Parliament. Yet the speakers were sincere at the time; and even if their own personal position afterwards seem inconsistent with the principles then laid down, yet the principles are not to suffer, nor is the law less sound on that account.



dent people, betrayed, divided, sold, and, as a State, annihilated. British clerks and officers were smuggled into her Parliament to vote away the Constitution of a country to which they were strangers, and in which they had neither interest nor connection. They were employed to cancel the royal charter of the Irish nation, guaranteed by the British Government, sanctioned by the British Legislature, and unequivocally confirmed by the words, the signature, and the great seal of their monarch.

"The situation of the Speaker on that night was of the most distressing nature. A sincere and ardent enemy of the measure, he headed its opponents; he resisted it with all the power of his mind, the resources of his experience, his influence, and his eloquence.

"It was, however, through his voice that it was to be proclaimed and consummated. His only alternative (resignation) would have been unavailing, and could have added nothing to his character. His expressive countenance bespoke the inquietude of his feeling; solicitude was perceptible in every glance, and his embarrassment was obvious in every word he uttered.

"The galleries were full; but the change was lamentable. They were no longer crowded with those who had been accustomed to witness the eloquence and to animate the debates of that devoted assembly. A monotonous and melancholy murmur ran through the benches; scarcely a word was exchanged amongst the members. Nobody seemed at ease; no cheerfulness was apparent, and the ordinary business for a short time proceeded in the usual manner.

"At length the expected moment arrived. The order of the day—for the third reading of the bill for a 'Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland'—was moved by Lord Castlereagh. Unvaried, tame, cold-blooded,—the words seemed frozen as they issued from his lips; and, as if a simple citizen of the world, he seemed to have no sensation on the subject.

"The Speaker, Mr. Foster, who was one of the most vehement opponents of the Union from first to last, would have risen and left the House with his friends, if he could. But this would have availed nothing. With grave dignity he presided over 'the last agony of the expiring Parliament.' He held up the bill for a moment in silence, then asked the usual question, to which the response, 'Aye,' was languid, but unmistakeable. Another momentary pause ensued. Again his lips seemed to

decline their office. At length, with an eye averted from the object which he hated, he proclaimed, with a subdued voice, '*The ayes have it.*' For an instant he stood statue-like; then, indignantly and in disgust, flung the bill upon the table, and sunk into his chair with an exhausted spirit."\*

So far, the picturesque historian of the *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*; and, doubtless, to many readers this closing performance will appear somewhat histrionic and melodramatic. Yet, in sad and bitter earnest, that scene was deep tragedy; and its catastrophe is here with us at this day—in thousands upon thousands of ruined cabins, and pining prisoners, and outlawed rebels, and the poverty and hunger that move and scandalize the world. A few details will fitly close up this subject.

The bill was carried up to the House of Peers by Lord Castlereagh, but the consideration of it was postponed. On its second reading, the Earls of Farnham and Bellamont offered some clauses, which were negatived, and the bill was committed. It passed the committee without amendment, was reported in due form, and, after an uninteresting debate, was read a third time on the 13th of June. A protest was entered by the Duke of Leinster and the other dissenting Peers. This protest is given at full length in the Lords' journals; but it will be enough in this place to record its last paragraph and summing up, with the names of the dissentient Peers. It concludes in these words:—

"Because the argument made use of in favour of the Union, namely, that the sense of the people of Ireland is in its favour, we know to be untrue; and as the Ministers have declared that they would not press the measure against the

\* It is well to preserve the record of those Irishmen who voted against the extinction of their country. As for the names of those persons, placemen, pensioners, and bribe-takers, who voted on the other side, it were better to forget them. But their names and crime are also a portion of history; and many readers may be interested to know the manner in which some great families in Ireland obtained their titles and laid the foundation of their fortunes. Candour also requires it to be stated that some few members did vote for the Union without either bribe or pension, without being influenced either by interest or intimidation; and, therefore, it is presumable, from a sincere conviction that this measure would benefit the two countries. There was published soon after the Union a "Red List" and a "Black List," giving the names of those who were for and against the measure. The lists have often been reprinted. They may be found in Plowden's Appendix and in Sir Jonah Barrington's *Rise and Fall*. But as the latter has added some observations to many of the names, either from his own personal knowledge or from common notoriety at the time, we adopt his edition of the lists.—See Appendix, No. II.



sense of the people, and as the people have pronounced decidedly, and under all difficulties, their judgment against it, we have, together with the sense of the country, the authority of the Minister to enter our protest against the project of Union, against the yoke which it imposes, the dishonour which it inflicts, the disqualification passed upon the peerage, the stigma thereby branded on the realm, the disproportionate principle of expense it introduces, the means employed to effect it, the discontents it has excited and must continue to excite. Against all these, and the fatal consequences they may produce, we have endeavoured to interpose our votes, and failing, we transmit to after-times our names in solemn protest, on behalf of the Parliamentary Constitution of this realm, the liberty which it secured, the trade which it protected, the connection which it preserved, and the Constitution which it supplied and fortified. This we feel ourselves called upon to do in support of our characters, our honour, and whatever is left to us worthy to be transmitted to our posterity.

“LEINSTER.  
ARRAN.  
MOUNTCASHEL.  
FARNHAM.  
BELMORE, by proxy.  
MASSY, by proxy.  
STRANGFORD.  
GRANARD.  
LUDLOW, by proxy.  
MOIRA, by proxy.  
REV. WATERFORD and LISMORE.  
POWERSCOURT.  
DE VESCI.  
CHARLEMONT.  
KINGSTON, by proxy.  
RIVERSDALE, by proxy.  
MEATH.  
LISMORE, by proxy.  
SUNDERLIN.”

No part of the plan now remained for the Secretary to bring forward but the scheme of compensation. This he plausibly ushered in upon a principle of justice. He proposed a grant of £1,260,000 for those who should suffer a loss of patronage, and be deprived of a source of wealth, by the disfranchisement of eighty-four boroughs—at the rate of £15,000 to each. Mr. Saurin, Mr. J. Claudius Beresford, and Mr. Dawson, maintained that the grant of compensation to those who had no right to hold such a species of property would be an insult to the public, and an infringement of the Constitution. Mr. Prendergast defended the

proposition, alleging, that though such possessions might have been vicious in their origin, yet, from prescriptive usage, and from having been the subject of contracts and family settlements, they could not be confiscated without a breach of honour and propriety. In the House of Peers, this bill was chiefly opposed by the Earl of Farnham; but it passed into law with little opposition in either House, the Anti-Unionists having now given up the question as lost.\*

Soon after the Union bill had passed through both Houses of the Irish Parliament, Mr. Pitt brought a bill in the same form into the British House of Commons. It proceeded through the usual stages without occasioning any important debate; and was sent, on the 24th of June, to the Peers. On the 30th, Lord Granville moved for its third reading, declaring that he rose for that purpose with greater pleasure than he had ever felt before in making any proposition to their lordships. The Marquis of Downshire merely said that his opinion of the measure remained unaltered, and that he would, therefore, give the bill his decided negative. It passed without a division; and, on the 2d of July, it received the royal assent.

On the 29th of July, in proroguing the last separate Parliament of Great Britain, the King felicitated his Parliament, as he well might:—

“With peculiar satisfaction I congratulate you on the success of the steps which you have taken for effecting an entire Union between my kingdoms. This great measure, on which my wishes have been long earnestly bent, I shall ever consider as the happiest event of my reign.”

The royal assent was given in Ireland to the Union Bill on the 1st of August, the anniversary of the accession of the

\* When the Compensation Statute had received the royal assent, the Viceroy appointed four commissioners to carry its provisions into execution. Three were members of Parliament, whose salaries of £1,200 a year each (with probable advantages) were a tolerable consideration for their former services. The Honourable Mr. Annesley, Secretary Hamilton, and Dr. Duigenan, were the principal commissioners of that extraordinary distribution. Unfortunately, we have not full details and accounts of this scandalous pecuniary transaction. Sir Jonah Barrington says:—

“It is to be lamented that the records of the proceedings have been *unaccountably disposed of*. A voluminous copy of claims, accepted and rejected, was published, and partially circulated; but the great and important grants, the *private* pensions, and *occult* compensations, have never been made public, further than by those who received them. It is known that—

“Lord Shannon received for his patronage in the Commons,	£45,000
The Marquis of Ely,	45,000
Lord Clanmorris (besides a peerage),	23,000
Lord Belvidere (besides his <i>douceur</i> ),	15,000
Sir Hercules Langrishe,	15,000



House of Brunswick to the thrones of these realms. The next day the Lord-Lieutenant put an end to the session with an appropriate speech from the Throne. Lord Cornwallis said, amongst other fine things,—speaking to the legislators whom he had bribed:—

“The whole business of this important session being at length happily concluded, it is with the most sincere satisfaction that I communicate to you, by his Majesty’s express command, his warmest acknowledgments for that ardent zeal and unshaken perseverance which you have so conspicuously manifested in maturing and completing the great measure of Legislative Union between this kingdom and Great Britain.

“The proofs you have given on this occasion of your uniform attachment to the real welfare of your country, inseparably connected with the security and prosperity of the empire at large, not only entitle you to the full approbation of your Sovereign, and to the applause of your fellow-subjects, but must afford you the surest claim to the gratitude of posterity.

“You will regret, with His Majesty, the reverse which His Majesty’s allies have experienced on the Continent; but His Majesty is persuaded that the firmness and public spirit of his subjects will enable him to persevere in the line of conduct which will best provide for the honour and the essential interests of his dominions, whose means and resources have now, by your wisdom, been more closely and intimately combined.”

Immediately after passing the English Act of Union, early in July, the British Parliament was prorogued; and the “Union,” in so far as parchment can make an union, was complete. It was to take effect from the 1st of January, 1801. Pursuant to proclamation, a new Imperial Standard was on that day displayed on the Tower of London, and on the Castles of Edinburgh and Dublin. It was the same Royal Standard now in use; being “quartered, first and fourth, England; second, Scotland; third, Ireland.” So, since that day, the Harp of Ireland has its place in the corner of the great Banner of England.

The “Union Jack” was also ordained and described by the same proclamation—“And it is our will and pleasure that the Union flag shall be azure, the crosses, saltires of St. Andrew and St. Patrick, quarterly per saltire, counterchanged, argent and gulas; the latter imbricated of the second, surmounted by the Cross of St. George of the third, as the saltire.”

As for the Public Debt of Ireland,

which was to remain a separate charge on the revenues of that country, that debt had been less than four millions just before the insurrection. At the Union that debt was declared to be £26,841,219, being increased nearly *seven-fold* in three years. That is to say, the whole of the expenses incurred in provoking that insurrection—then in maintaining a great army to crush it—the cost of keeping English and Scotch militia regiments in the country—the pay of the Hessians—the bribes and pensions to spies, informers, and members of Parliament—the compensation fund to owners of boroughs—all was charged to Irish account.

O’Connell said, “It was strange that Ireland was not afterwards made to pay for the knife with which Lord Castle-reagh, twenty-two years later, cut his own throat!”

This enormous debt was to remain separate from the English Debt, according to the Act of Union,\* until these two conditions should occur: *First*. That the two debts should come to bear to each other the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain to two parts for Ireland; and, *Second*. That the respective circumstances of the two countries should admit of uniform taxation.

After that, they were to be consolidated. Since that day, an English Chancellor of the Exchequer has “kept the books” of the two islands; so that while the debt of England went on increasing rapidly, owing to the war, and subsidies to all enemies of France, the debt of Ireland was somehow found to increase more than twice as fast as that of England—as if Ireland had a *double* interest in crushing France.

“Woe to the land on whose judgment-seats a stranger sits—at whose gates a stranger watches!” We may add, “whose books a stranger keeps!”†

\* See the Act in the Appendix, No. III.

† Mr. O’Neill Daunt, in his excellent paper entitled, *Financial Grievances of Ireland*, extracts from *Parliamentary Paper No. 35*, of 1819, this table:—

YEAR.	BRITISH DEBT.	AN. CHARGE.	IRISH DEBT.	AN. CHARGE.
5th Jan. 1801.	£ 450,504,984	£ 17,718,851	£ 28,545,134	£ 1,244,463
5th Jan. 1817.	734,522,104	28,238,416	112,704,773	4,104,514

The difference between the statement of the Irish Debt given in this table, and that given in the text (from another Parliamentary paper of the same year), is made up by adding a small amount of *unfunded* debt.

Thus, while the Imperial Government less than doubled the British Debt, they quadrupled the Irish Debt. By this Management the Irish Debt,



The two debts were consolidated in 1817. According to Lord Castlereagh's report to Parliament, the military force in Ireland at the time of the Union amounted to one hundred and twenty-six thousand five hundred men—viz., forty-five thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine regulars, twenty-seven thousand one hundred and four militia, and fifty-three thousand five hundred and fifty-seven yeomanry.

## CHAPTER XV.

1800—1803.

The Catholics Duped—Resignation of Pitt—Mystery of this Resignation—First Measure of United Parliament—Suspension of *Habeas Corpus*—Report of Secret Committee—Fate of Lord Clare—Lord Hardwicke Viceroy—Peace of Amiens—Treaty Violated by England—Malta—War again Declared by England—Mr. Pitt resumes Office—Coalition against France.

THE Union had scarcely been accomplished, when those Irish Catholics who had supported the measure found they had been cheated, as usual, by the British Government. They had been told that Catholic Emancipation would at once be made a Ministerial measure; and in so far as the distinct pledges of Mr. Pitt and of Lord Cornwallis could avail them, they were assured of their liberties.

The first United Parliament met on the 22d of January. It immediately began to be rumoured that Mr. Pitt and his Ministry were about to resign. The reason falsely alleged for the resignation was that King George III. would not tolerate the idea of Catholic Emancipation, which he imagined to be contrary to his Coronation Oath; and as Mr. Pitt pretended to be pledged to that measure, he made this difference the pretext for a temporary resignation, which he found expedient at this time for other reasons.

Mr. Pitt had been the all-powerful Minister who had governed England for seventeen years. It was he who had recalled Lord Fitzwilliam from the Irish Viceroyalty, because that nobleman favoured Catholic Emancipation. It was he who had sent over Lord Camden

with express instructions to prevent such emancipation by the Irish Parliament; and in desiring Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh to promise Catholic relief after the Union, he intended to delude the Catholics into a support of his measure, and to deceive them afterwards. He knew the King's opinion upon that question—if anything that passed in the mind of George III. can be called an opinion—and that the obstinate and stupid old man would never suffer any project of Catholic Emancipation to be made a Ministerial measure.

No human being acquainted with public affairs ever believed that Mr. Pitt resigned office at that time on account of the Catholic question, or any other Irish question whatever. The truth was, simply, that Mr. Pitt's continental policy had failed, and that the English people, devoured by taxes, and wearied out with the still unfulfilled predictions of the total ruin of their French enemy, were crying aloud for peace. Mr. Pitt saw that peace must be made, at least for a little while; but his sullen pride could not submit to negotiate that peace himself. Mr. Plowden\* says:—

“The only transaction which furnished him with a plausible or popular ground for resignation was the *Catholic question*, which that crafty Minister and his followers have so frequently used as a most powerful engine for the worst of political purposes. Within very few days after the meeting of Parliament, he made no secret of his resignation. Great were the surprise and consternation which attended the report. Few, indeed, gave credit to the alleged cause of resignation—namely, his inability to carry the Catholic question, which was imperiously necessary for the safety of the state. He was too fond of power, his influence in the country was too imposing, Ireland was too insignificant to have caused such an important change in all the departments of the state. Abstracting from the merits and justice of the question, and from the expediency or necessity of its being then propounded and carried, neither Mr. Pitt's friends nor opponents could bring their minds to believe that an administration which had established itself in spite of the House of Commons; which had baffled, and at last subdued, a most formidable opposition; which had main-

which in 1801 had been to the British as one to sixteen and a half, was forced up to bear to the British Debt the ratio of one to seven and a half. This was the proportion required by the Act of Union, as a condition of subjecting Ireland to indiscriminate taxation with Great Britain. Ireland was to be loaded with inordinate debt; and then this debt was to be made the pretext for raising her taxation to the high British standard, and thereby rendering her liable to the pre-union debt of Great Britain!

\* Worthy Mr. Plowden, who had rather supported the Union, as many other leading Catholics had done, when he wrote, ten years later, the second series of his *Historical Collections*, says, in its first page: “They (the Catholics) now beheld the baleful measure of Union in its full deformity. But they beheld it too late.



tained itself upon new courtly principles for seventeen years, and still commanded a decided majority in the Cabinet and Senate, should have been thus broken up from the Premier's inability to carry so simple and just a measure as that of an equal participation of Constitutional rights amongst all the King's subjects."

"Simple and just a measure" as this naturally appeared to the Catholic historian, it was steadily refused and resisted, both by Mr. Pitt and by his whole party, for twenty-nine years longer, and then only carried on account of the imminent danger of civil war, as its Ministerial supporters alleged.

There was an air of mystery about the retirement of Ministers at this crisis. Nobody gave credit to the ostensible motives of it; and several distinct reasons were alleged and discussed. In fact, every conceivable reason, except the true one, was assigned by the friends of Mr. Pitt. One was a serious difference which had sprung up between the Minister and the Duke of York,\* partly with respect to military arrangements and operations; partly because certain "unconstitutional influence in a high quarter counteracted and embarrassed the important duties of His Majesty's official and responsible advisers;" and partly, it was also alleged, because the Duke of York, as the special patron of the Orange Society, was resolutely opposed to the project of Catholic Emancipation. His Royal Highness might have spared his uneasiness. No Grand Master of Orangemen was ever more violently opposed to all claims and rights of Catholics than Mr. Pitt himself.

Innocent Catholics had been expecting that the King's speech, on opening this session, would have recommended a measure for their emancipation. The subject was not once alluded to. The address was moved in the House of Commons by

\* From the year 1797, the Orange Societies were so tenderly cherished and zealously promoted by the Duke of York, that almost every regiment, even of militia, in Ireland, received from the office of the Commander-in-chief encouragement, authority, or orders for establishing Orange Lodges in their respective regiments. The person delegated for this mission was generally the Sergeant-major, or some other non-commissioned officer, signalized for his zeal against the Catholics. In some instances, the institution of Orange Lodges, under this high and official sanction, has produced ferment and dissension, which compelled the commanding officer to investigate and punish both those who gave rise to, and those who perpetrated, the consequent outrages; when often, to the astonishment of the corps, and in defiance of military discipline and subordination, the conduct of the Sergeant has been justified by the production of the official document or warrant, most irregularly superseding that immediate authority upon which alone the subordination and union of a regiment depend.

Sir Watkin William Wynne (commander of the Ancient Britons). Mr. Grey moved an amendment, and made some pointed observations upon Ireland and the Union. "If any good effect," he said, "could result from a measure so brought forward and so supported, he hoped it would be the extension of the British Constitution to the Catholics of Ireland, and their restoration to all the rights of British subjects. This they had been taught to expect, and this was the least they were entitled to in return for that measure having been forced upon them by England." Mr. Pitt, in replying to Mr. Grey, studiously avoided even remote reference to Ireland. Ireland had served his turn; she was now safe under British law and government; and he desired to hear of her no more. But he had much to say in denunciation of "Jacobinism," which was the name then given to any assertion of any kind of right or liberty, concluding his speech with a warm appeal to the majority of the House, whether all the public calamities of this, and all the nations of the Continent, were not occasioned by those principles which the gentleman opposite to him had uniformly supported, and which he and the gentlemen on his side of the House had as uniformly combated.

Before quitting the subject of Mr. Pitt's deliberate deception upon the Irish Catholics, it must be mentioned that the paper which had been delivered by Lord Cornwallis to Doctor Troy, Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and Lord Fingal, soon became public; although Lord Cornwallis had prudently stipulated that it should be "*discreetly* communicated to the Bishops, and should not find its way into the newspapers."\* When Mr. Grey, on the 25th of March, moved the House of Commons to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the state of the nation, he referred to these written pledges, and roundly charged them with having been given without sincerity and without authority. "If Catholic freedom were offered to the Irish as the price of their support of the Union, if the faith of the Government were pledged on that occasion, it forms the highest species of criminality in Ministers; because I am confident," said he, "if such were the case, it was so pledged without the authority of the King; for I know His Majesty is superior to the idea of swerving in the slightest degree from the observance of his word. This, then, was a crime of the

\* This is the document which is printed in a note to the preceding chapter.



highest denomination in Ministers, and calls for inquiry. I ask, if such promise were made, was Lord Clare and the Protestant Ascendancy Party made acquainted with it? If so, they were a party to the delusion that was intended to be practised on the unhappy Catholic."

Mr. Pitt, though no longer in office, sat on the Ministerial side of the House—in fact, he was virtually Prime Minister all the while. He replied to Mr. Grey, and touched as lightly as possible upon that part of his speech which referred to Ireland. Concerning the famous written pledge, he said, "he had no part in the wording of that paper. It was drawn up by Lord Castlereagh. To the sentiments it contained, *when properly interpreted*, he, however, subscribed: further, he would neither avow nor explain." He added: "As to the particular expressions in the paper, he knew nothing of them, having never seen it before it was published. He denied that any pledge had been given to the Catholics, either by himself, Lord Cornwallis, or the noble lord near him (Castlereagh). The Catholics might very naturally have conceived a hope, and he himself had always thought that in time that measure would be a consequence of the Union, because the difficulties would be fewer than before."

Mr. Plowden wrote to Lord Cornwallis upon the subject; and his lordship, in his reply, stated that *the paper* (which has been called the pledge to the Catholics) "was hastily given by him to Dr. Troy, to be circulated amongst his friends, with the view of preventing any immediate disturbances, or other bad effects."

In short, the Catholics very soon perceived that they had been deluded, and understood very well that their cause had been turned into a convenient pretext by Mr. Pitt for abandoning office, in order to throw upon other men the business of making the Peace of Amiens.\*

Thus, within six weeks after carrying the Union, Mr. Pitt, Lord Grenville, Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville), Lord Cornwallis, and Lord Castlereagh, all went out of office. Mr. Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons, was the new Prime Minister; and Lord Hardwicke was sent over as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues resigned, pledging

\* It has always been considered by English statesmen a small and easy matter to cheat the Irish. More than two hundred years before, Sir Francis Bacon (afterwards Lord Bacon), in his "Consideration Touching the Queen's Service in Ireland," said: "Nothing can be more fit than a treaty, or a shadow of a treaty, of a peace with Spain, which, methinks, should be in our power to fasten, at least *rumore tenus*, to the deluding of as wise a people as the Irish."

themselves to support their successors (who declined to accept office without that support), in an administration avowedly placed on implacable hostility to that identical measure which he scrupled not to declare essential to the safety of the empire.

The first measure which the Imperial Parliament bestowed upon Ireland was not an Act of Emancipation, but an Act for suspending the writ of *Habeas Corpus*, and establishing martial law. Lord Castlereagh had for some time been preparing the materials for the fabrication of a report of a secret committee, to prove (contrary to the fact) that rebellion still existed in Ireland, and, therefore, that there was a necessity for renewing the Act for suspending the *Habeas Corpus*, which was about to expire on the 25th of March. Accordingly, he had fixed the 20th of February for moving for a bill to enable the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to put martial law in force in such parts of Ireland as he should think proper.

The first Act for this purpose was passed in the beginning of April, and was to expire in three months. Shortly after its passage, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by command of His Majesty, laid before the House of Commons copies and extracts of papers, containing secret information received by His Majesty's Government relative to the state of Ireland, and proceedings of certain disaffected persons in both parts of the United Kingdom, which, upon his motion, were referred to a committee. This was a preconcerted plan for representing Ireland, and collaterally the whole United Kingdom, as overrun with the spirit of Jacobinism. On no occasion was Mr. Pitt more vehement in his declamation against Jacobinism, apparently with a view of drawing off the public attention from the real authors of the national disasters, by directing its indignation against the Jacobins, whose cause they essentially tended to strengthen. "It was," said he, "the inherent spirit of Jacobinism to ally itself with every disaster, to press into its service every evil of the state, to wed itself to every misfortune of the country it inhabits, and to make them forerunners of its ruin."

The report of this secret committee was well got up to effect Mr. Pitt's favourite policy—that of "exciting alarm." It represented the three kingdoms as infested with the spirit of rebellion, French principles, or "Jacobinism." It recited with great emphasis certain songs and toasts, which were alleged to be favourites with the seditious rabble.



It reported the formation of new societies of Millenarians, New Jerusalem-ites, Spensonians, and other fanatics, whom it traced from London into Yorkshire, Lancashire, Nottingham, Scotland, and other neighbouring places, but it extended them not to Ireland. Yet Ireland was not to be wholly omitted where the report was, incidentally at least, calculated to justify the coercive measures intended for that part of the United Kingdom; and the committee added to their own surmises of the workings of these fanatics, *that they borrowed their ideas from the Irish rebellion*. "They saw in Ireland the example of such a rebellion as they wished to promote here." They further produced a printed address, signed *Hybernicus*, directed to Britons and fellow-citizens. The committee said: "They had thus detailed the proceedings of the disaffected, carried on in the metropolis, and as directed principally to its disturbance, but these would afford a very inadequate representation of the extent of the confederacy; yet, in proceeding to advert to the state of the other parts of the country, *and even of Ireland*, they omitted to notice the concert which, in some measure, pervaded the whole." In other parts of the report they lay stress upon the exaggerated statements of some men of the number of the confederates, all trained to military exercise, which, including Ireland, amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand. They added that the principal of these emissaries were represented as delegated from London, York, Birmingham, Bristol, Sheffield, and other considerable towns, *as well as from Ireland*.

The committee added that a new Revolutionary Association had been formed in Ireland; that a "Committee of Rebellion," composed of certain Irishmen, existed in Paris, and was negotiating with the French Government on the best mode of abolishing the British Constitution.

This astounding report was received by Parliament as ample proof of all that it affirmed.

When Lord Hobart, as Secretary of State for Ireland, introduced to the Lords the bill for continuing martial law in Ireland, he observed that he had not attempted to use any arguments to prove the necessity for passing the bill, because "the report on the face of it proved the necessity, and he thought their lordships would be more impressed with the arguments contained in the report than by any he could add." All the restrictive and coercive bills touching Ireland were passed under the still prevailing influence of Mr.

Pitt and Lord Grenville; the opposition to them was numerically insignificant. During the first session of the Imperial Parliament, no question respecting Ireland caused any difference between the seceders and their successors. They both equally deprecated the very mention of Catholic Emancipation, and emulated each other in zeal for curbing and coercing the Irish people.

The bill passed both Houses by immense majorities; and the British Constitution was suspended, so far as respected Ireland. The Lord-Lieutenant was empowered to proclaim any part, or the whole, of the island under martial law; the Act professed to be only temporary, as these coercion laws for Ireland are always said to be, but they are almost always renewed before they expire; and thus, under one name or another, "Insurrection Act," "Crime and Outrage Act," and the like, this coercive code has been substantially the law of Ireland from that day to the present.

Another Irish measure, passed about the same time, was an Act to regulate the office of Master of the Rolls in Ireland. Before the Union this office was a mere sinecure, holden at the pleasure of the Crown by two Peers (Lords Glandore and Carysfort), with considerable salaries. These had been promised a large compensation for the loss of their places in case the Union should be carried. Henceforward it was to be an efficient legal office, to be holden for life, with a suitable salary, in order to give the Irish Chancellor an opportunity of attending his legislative duties in the House of Peers. It was warmly contended that, as the Commissioners for the Rolls were removable at pleasure from the sinecures, they were entitled to no compensation, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime-Sergeant had been. Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh justified the compensation, because it had been promised by the Irish Parliament, and they were bounden in honour to make it good.

"In fact," as Mr. Plowden bitterly observes, "none but the *Catholic* supporters of the Union had to complain of Ministerial infidelity in the observance of previous stipulations and promises."

There was one other who thought he had reason to complain. This was Lord Clare. The Irish Chancellor had for many years made himself the instrument, and a most able and thorough-going instrument, of Mr. Pitt's policy in Ireland. Scarcely had Lord Castlereagh himself been more efficient in accomplishing the Union; and his lordship, who was natur-



ally arrogant and presumptuous, evidently imagined that he was only promoting himself from a narrow provincial stage to the wide imperial theatre, where his audacity and powerful will would soon enable him to predominate in London as he had done in Dublin. In the discussion of this bill to complete the great job of the Rolls Court, Mr. Pitt said, "It was highly desirable that the House of Lords should enjoy the benefit of that great luminary of the law who had rendered such eminent services to his country." Mr. Grey replied that much had been said that night in praise of the Irish Chancellor. "He only knew his politics, and those he highly disapproved of. It had been already shown that night that the noble lord vindicated the use of torture to extort confessions." Lord Clare, from his first arrival in England, put himself at the head of the opponents of the Catholic claims. Foreseeing that the new administration was to consist of men assuming the arrogant appellation of the *King's friends*, he attempted, by decrying his own country in the Imperial Parliament, to secure, as one of the *King's friends*, an influence in the councils of Great Britain.

He failed in this unworthy ambition. He was reminded, in the House of Lords, that he was not now predominating over an assembly of Irish Peers. He was not at all consulted in the arrangements for the new Addington Administration. He returned to Ireland consumed by disappointment, and did not scruple to express his bitter regret at the part he had taken in carrying the Union. If he did regret that act it was for his own sake alone, not for the sake of his country.

He remained some time in London in order to negotiate for some more efficient influence in the British Cabinet than the Great Seal of Ireland was ever likely to give him. Mr. Pitt, who well knew that nobleman's insatiable ambition, cautioned Mr. Addington against admitting him to a situation in which, in case of resumption (of which Mr. Pitt never lost sight), he might meet a rival in the colleague. Lord Clare, foiled in his projects of British ambition, his pride wounded by the speeches of the late Duke of Bedford and some other of the Whig Lords in Parliament, who freely reminded him that Union had not transferred his dictatorial powers to the Imperial Parliament, had, in disgust, formed the resolution of withdrawing from scenes which he neither directed nor controlled. He had determined to return to his official situation in Ireland; but, by the Union, the Irish

Seal had been shorn of its lustre and all political consequence.

Lord Clare soon fell into bad health; and he died within the year and day after that Act of Union which was to have crowned him with triumph. He died in January, 1802. His remains were interred with great pomp, in St. Peter's Churchyard, in Dublin. Some of the populace attempted at the funeral to express their horror of the deceased by offering indignities to his corpse.

It is singular that the only two eminent men who were within the present century borne to their graves amidst the hootings of the people, were the Earl of Clare and the Marquis of Londonderry (Castlereagh), the two able tools of British policy in ruining the independence of their country.

The Earl of Hardwicke arrived in Dublin, to assume his government, on the 25th of May. Lord Cornwallis proceeded to England in June; and we next hear of him as the negotiator of the Peace of Amiens.

The English and French people both eagerly desired peace. The First Consul, Buonaparte, was also sincerely desirous of giving repose to his countrymen, after so many years of bloody warfare. As Mr. Pitt and his high Anti-Jacobin friends were notoriously the party of war, it was believed in France that the change of Ministry betokened a disposition towards peace in the councils of England. The First Consul was not aware that Mr. Pitt still continued really to govern the country; and that he had made this new arrangement because he desired that other men than himself should make that treaty and afterwards violate it. It is manifest that Napoleon Buonaparte did not at that time fully know how incompatible, how mutually destructive, were a French Government—the product of the revolution—and an English oligarchy. He not only truly desired peace, but could see no reason why it might not be attained; while Mr. Pitt and the Court were fully resolved that, while England had a ship afloat and a guinea to hire allies, the struggle must go on. The momentary Peace of Amiens was intended to delude the French; and Mr. Pitt ceased for awhile to be the ostensible Minister, adroitly availing himself of his pretended zeal for the Catholic question, by which he had deluded the Irish.

The preliminaries of peace were signed at London, the 1st of October, in this year, 1801. The treaty itself was signed at the city of Amiens, the 27th of March, 1802, between France, Great Britain,



Spain, and the Batavian Republic. France and England were represented by Joseph Buonaparte and Lord Cornwallis. England was to preserve, of her maritime conquests, the two islands of Ceylon and Trinidad. France was to repossess all her colonies. The Republic of the Seven Islands was to be recognized. Malta was to be restored to the Order of the Knights. Spain and the Batavian Republic were to have back all their colonies, except Ceylon and Trinidad; and the French were to evacuate Rome, Naples, and the Isle of Elba. A cessation of hostilities, by land and sea, had been already proclaimed; and on the signature of the treaty, the people really began to taste the luxury of peace.

The popular outcry for peace was now satisfied; but as it had been resolved upon from the first that this repose should be of very short duration, pretexts began to be immediately sought for breaking the treaty. The French Government was making active naval preparations in the port of Brest, intended ostensibly for St. Domingo; but it was assumed that the armament was really for Ireland.

Similar naval preparations and military movements were on foot in England in the winter of 1802. In the spring of 1803, volunteering in England, and the raising of yeomanry corps in Ireland, were matters of public notoriety.

In fact, the English Government was resolved never to give up the island of St. Malta; and as this was a vital article of the treaty in the eyes of Buonaparte, it was evident that war must again break out. Lord Whitworth was sent over as Minister to France; and from his dispatches to London, and those of Lord Hawkesbury in reply, it is easy to discover what were the true obstacles to the real establishment of peace.

Buonaparte, in a conference with Lord Whitworth, communicated to the British Government, 21st February, 1803, reiterated his complaints against the British Government in reference to the retention of Malta, in direct violation of the terms of the treaty. He said: "Of the two, he would rather see us (the English) in possession of the Faubourg St. Antoine than of Malta." . . . He complained of the protection given in England to the assassin Georges, handsomely pensioned, and of his plans being permitted to be carried into effect in France, and of two of his fellow-agents being sent into France by the *émigrés* to assassinate him (Buonaparte), and being then in custody. The two men he referred to were subsequently tried, and convicted of the crime

they were charged with on their own confessions.

In regard to the abuse launched on Buonaparte in the English papers, and French emigrant journals published in London, he (the First Consul) said to Lord Whitworth: "The irritation he felt against England increased daily, because every wind which blew from England brought nothing but enmity and hatred against him." Lord Hawkesbury, in reply to Lord Whitworth's communication, 18th February, 1803, made the following admission, for the first time explicitly and plainly expressed: "With regard to that article of the treaty which relates to Malta, the stipulations contained in it, owing to circumstances which it was not in the power of His Majesty to control, had not been found capable of execution."

In Lord Whitworth's communication (dated February 21, 1803) to Lord Hawkesbury, an account is given of an interview with Buonaparte, when the latter, in reference to the proofs he had given of a desire to maintain peace, said he wished to know what he had to gain by going to war with England. A descent was the only means of offence he had, and if determined to attempt one, it must be made by putting himself at the head of an expedition. But how could it be supposed that, after having gained the height on which he stood, he would risk his life and reputation in such a hazardous attempt, unless forced to it by necessity, when the chances were, that he and the *greatest part of the expedition would go to the bottom of the sea*. He talked much on the subject, but never affected to diminish the danger. He acknowledged there were a hundred chances to one against him; but still he was determined to attempt it, if war should be the consequence of the present discussion; and, such was the disposition of the troops, that army after army would be found for the enterprise. He concluded by stating that France, with an army of four hundred and eighty thousand men, to be immediately completed, was ready for the most desperate enterprise; that England, with her fleet, was mistress of the seas, which he did not think he should be able to equal in ten years. Two such countries, by a proper understanding, might govern the world, but by their strifes might overturn it.

On the 9th of March, 1803, a message from the King was delivered to the Parliament, wherein His Majesty "thinks it necessary to acquaint the House of Commons that, as very considerable military



preparations were carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, he had judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions."

Lord Whitworth, in March, by the instructions of his Government, demanded an explanation of the motives and objects of the warlike preparations in the French ports, and the reply (not official) of M. Talleyrand was said to have been short and not satisfactory—"It was the will of the First Consul." Buonaparte, on the other hand, on the 11th of March, at a levee at the Tuilleries, attended by the different ambassadors and a great number of distinguished persons, on entering the grand saloon seemed violently agitated, and appeared to be conversing with his attendants, or rather thinking aloud, for the following words, pronounced in a very audible voice, were heard by all the persons in the audience chamber:—"Vengeance will fall on that power which will be the cause of the war." He approached the British Ambassador, Lord Whitworth, and said: "You know, my lord, that a terrible storm has arisen between England and France." Lord Whitworth said it was to be hoped that this storm would be dissipated without any serious consequences. Buonaparte replied: "It will be dissipated when England shall have evacuated Malta; if not, the cloud would burst and the bolt must fall. The King of England had promised by treaty to evacuate that place; and who was to violate the faith of treaties?"

All this while, Mr. Pitt was out of office; and it was given out that his health was so shattered as to render him quite incapable of the cares and labours of public business; yet, in reality, while the *London Chronicle* was officially announcing his great sufferings, Mr. Pitt had never been so intensely and indefatigably occupied with state affairs as he was at the very time of these negotiations.\* There can be no reasonable doubt that he directed and governed them from point to point.

On the 10th of May, the Court of London presented certain new projects plainly inadmissible; making further demands on France, and saying nothing of the surrender of Malta. The new conditions being rejected, Lord Whitworth demanded his passports, in order to quit the country.

On the 15th of May, 1803, His Britannic Majesty sent a message to Parliament announcing the recall of the British Ambassador from Paris, and the departure of

\* Doctor Madden (*U. I. Third Series*, p. 310), makes this statement on the authority of Lady Hester Stanhope, Mr. Pitt's niece and private secretary.

the French Ambassador from London. The declaration of hostilities with France was published in *The Gazette* of 18th May, 1803.

Mr. Pitt's health was immediately restored. On the 23d of May there was an animated debate in the House on an address to the King, pledging the House to support him in the vigorous prosecution of the war. On that night, the night of the debate of the 23d of May, Mr. Pitt was found in his place in Parliament, and it is hardly necessary to add that his "voice was still for war." Perhaps greater vigour of mind or body was never exhibited by him than on that occasion. The ex-Minister was himself again. War was about to be let loose on the world, and all the principles of evil seemed concentrated in the unholy exultation with which the prospect of war was hailed on that occasion. In the heat of his passion, he reviled Buonaparte in the most vehement terms of invective; he spoke of the First Consul as "a sea of liquid fire, which destroyed everything which was unfortunate enough to come in contact with it." It then only remained for honourable members to express a hope that "the only man in the empire qualified to conduct the war to a successful issue" should be recalled to the councils of his Sovereign.

Mr. Pitt resumed in May, 1804, the supreme direction of public affairs as Prime Minister. He made no stipulation with the King concerning the Catholic claims; nor did he ever again offend his Sovereign's ear upon this subject, nor urge him to "violate his coronation oath" by emancipating four millions of his subjects.

Mr. Pitt's first great task now was to form that gigantic coalition of European Powers against France; and, occupied by these mighty projects, he thought no more of Ireland, unless when she seemed to need more coercion.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1802—1803.

First Year of the Union—Distress in Ireland—Riot in Dublin—Irish Exiles in France—Renewed Hopes of French Aid—The two Emmets, Mac-Neven, and O'Connor in France—Apprehensions of Invasion in England—Robert Emmet comes from France to Ireland—His Associates—His Plans—Miles Byrne—Despard's Conspiracy in England—Emmet's Preparations—Explosion in Patrick Street—The 23d of July—Failure—Bloody Riot—Murder of Lord Kilwarden—Emmet sends Miles Byrne to France—Retires to Wicklow—Returns to Dublin—Arrested—Tried—Convicted—Hanged—Fate of Russell.



THE first year of the Union was, for Ireland, a year of severe distress. The crops of 1801 had in great measure failed; and as the people then depended for subsistence chiefly upon agriculture, as they do still, the usual results ensued. Hunger and hardship produced discontent, and in some places disorder also. The fair promises of immediate prosperity which was to have followed the Union, were not realized. Even trade and commerce were languishing. Mr. Foster, late Speaker, stated, in his place in the Imperial Parliament, that in 1801 the decrease of exported linen was five million yards. The taxes were increasing as the means of paying them diminished; for Ireland had now to provide for the charges of that immense debt which had been contracted for slaughtering her people and purchasing her Parliament. Mr. Foster, in the same speech, mentioned that, although it had been acknowledged that the expenses of the current year would be considerably less than they had been in the preceding year, yet a million more was borrowed for the present than for the last year. The inference to be drawn from that measure, for various Union purposes, was too obvious to mention. The revenue was then collected at a much lighter rate of expense than it had been in 1782, when it was at £11, 12s. 4d. per cent. The revenues of the Post Office were, at the time he was speaking, collected at the enormous expenditure of £224 per cent. In 1800, the amount of grants, pensions, &c., on that score, was £34,000; in 1802, £51,000; and this is what he called "a falling year." Then the Catholics, whose eyes were at length opened to the gross deception of which they had been victims, felt sore and disappointed; especially as the persecuting Orange Societies were now greatly multiplied, and became each day, by direct encouragement of the Government and of a Royal Duke, more insolent and aggressive. A serious riot took place in Dublin. The anniversary commemoration of the battle of Aughrim, on the 12th of July, was in 1802 solemnized with more than ordinary pomp. The statue of King William, in College Green, was most superbly decorated with Orange colours, and several corps of yeomanry paraded round it in the course of the day. In the evening, the conduct of the yeomanry, and the spirit of this ill-judged and mischievous commemoration, so worked on the popular feelings, that the most serious consequences were apprehended. Mr. Alderman Stamer failed in his endeavours to prevent outrages; some yeomen were beaten to the ground. Major Swan was

knocked down and severely wounded: nor was the mob dispersed until Alderman Darley arrived with a large party of the Castle guard. Some of the populace were taken and severely punished. Attempts were made to raise this expression of popular soreness into a general spirit of disaffection, and a renovation of rebellion. Nothing, however, could be certainly traced beyond the temporary and local outrage upon the popular feeling, from this senseless annual ovation of the Ascendancy, lately rendered more poignantly provoking by the ferocity and growing power of the Orange societies.

On the whole, therefore, when the insidious negotiations of the English Government, preparatory to the violation of the treaty of Amiens, were going forward in London and Paris, the mass of the Irish people was still thoroughly disaffected; and persons connected with the Government were of opinion that, immediately on the fresh outbreak of war with France, a new French expedition, and on a larger scale than that of Heche, would be dispatched to Ireland; in which case there was no doubt of a general rising in the island.

The two Emmets, O'Connor, and many other Irish exiles, were then on the Continent; and were in communication with the First Consul, provisionally, with a view to future operations in case of the renewal of the war, which then seemed highly probable. Robert Emmet was then about twenty-four years of age. He had seen the atrocities of '93, the frauds and villanies by which the Union was accomplished; he saw his unhappy country still groaning under martial law, the great majority of his compatriots shut out from the Constitution, and, by means of packed juries and Orange magistrates, effectually deprived of the protection of law. His ardent spirit burned to redress these wrongs, and to do at least what one man might, to rouse the people for one more manly effort. The purity and elevation of his motives have never been questioned even by his enemies. What he desired and longed for with all the intensity of his passionate nature, was simply to see his people invested with the ordinary civil right of human beings, leading peaceful and honourable lives under the protecting shelter of a native Legislature, and having a law over them which they might reverence and obey, not curse and abhor.\*

\* Lord Castlereagh, a young man like Robert Emmet, but more "prudent," thus describes Emmet and his insurrection, after the danger was over, in a speech in Parliament:—"In place of a formidable conspiracy fraught with danger to the existing Gov-



Robert Emmet passed several months of the years 1800 and 1801 on the Continent and Peninsula—the greater part of that time on the tour in which he visited the south of France, Switzerland, and some parts of Spain. On his return from this tour, he visited Amsterdam and Brussels, where his brother, T. A. Emmet, had been sojourning since his liberation from Fort George, and banishment, in June, 1820.

It was impossible for Irishmen to be in France or Belgium in that year without perceiving the evident symptoms of a new and formidable struggle approaching. The English Minister had already refused to give up Malta; and formidable military and naval preparations were rapidly advancing both in France and in England. Equally impossible was it for the exiled United Irishmen not to turn with anxious hope to this new conjuncture of affairs. Doctor MacNeven was then in France, as well as Tone's friend, Thomas Russell. With whom the idea originated of entering

on a negotiation with the French Government does not seem clear; but certain it is that Robert Emmet, in the summer of 1802, had interviews both with Buonaparte and Talleyrand.

His design was, then, based on the expectation of a speedy rupture of the amicable relations between Great Britain and France, on a knowledge of extensive naval preparations in the northern seaports of France, and the impression left on his mind, by his interview with Buonaparte, and his frequent communications with Talleyrand, that those preparations were for an invasion of England, which was likely to be attempted in August, 1803; on the knowledge, communicated to him by Dowdall, of a movement being determined on by the Secret Society of England, with which Colonel Despard was connected; on the assurance of support and pecuniary assistance from very influential persons in Ireland; and, lastly, on the concurrence of several of the Irish leaders in Paris.

The late Lord Cloncurry informed Doc-

ument, it was only the wild and contemptible project of Mr. Emmet, a young man of a heated and enthusiastic imagination, who, inheriting a property of £3,000 from his father, which was entirely at his own disposal, thought he could not dispose of it to more advantage than in an attempt to overturn the Government of his country."

What a contrast between these two Irishmen! Castlereagh certainly was not of "a heated and enthusiastic imagination." He did not invest his patrimony in pikes. The one sold his country to her enemies, and was laden with riches and honours. The other, who spent all he possessed in an effort to redeem that country, perished on a gibbet, and the dogs of Thomas Street lapped his blood.

tor Madden that he dined in company with Robert Emmet and Surgeon Lawless, the day before the departure of the former for Ireland. "Emmet spoke of his plans with extreme enthusiasm; his features glowed with excitement, the perspiration burst through the pores, and ran down his forehead." Lawless was thoroughly acquainted with his intentions, and thought favourably of them; but Lord Cloncurry considered the plans impracticable, and was opposed to them. Doctor MacNeven, Hugh Wilson, Russell, Byrne, William and Thomas Corbett, Hamilton, and Sweeney, were intimate and confidential friends of Robert Emmet, as well as of his brother—several of them, there is positive proof, concurred in the attempt. All of them, it may be supposed, were cognisant of it. All their surviving friends are agreed on one point, that the project did not originate with Robert Emmet.

The letters of T. A. Emmet, at this period, establish the fact that, in the autumn and winter of 1802, the leading United Irishmen then on the Continent, in the event of a rupture between France and England, were bent on renewing their efforts, and that they looked upon the struggle in Ireland as suspended, but not relinquished.

That this also was the opinion of the English Government is equally certain. After the declaration of war, a number of intercepted letters, found on board the East Indiaman, Admiral Aplin, captured by the French, and published in the *Moniteur* by the Government, afford abundant proof of the panic which prevailed in England, and of the expectation of invasion that was general at that period. Very serious apprehensions were expressed in these letters of the results of an invasion in Ireland. It was stated, in a letter of Lord Charles Bentinck to his brother, Lord William Bentinck, Governor of Madras: "If Ireland be not attended to, it will be lost; these rascals (an endearing, familiar, gentleman-like way of describing the people of Ireland) are as ripe as ever for rebellion."

In an extract of a letter to General Clinton, of the 2d of June, we find the following passage: "I have learned from them (Irish people in England), with regret, that the lower classes of the men in Ireland were more disaffected than ever, even more than during the last rebellion, and that if the French could escape from our fleet, and land their troops in the north of Ireland, they would be received with satisfaction, and joined by a great number."



In a letter of Lord Grenville to the Marquis of Wellesley, dated the 12th of July, 1803, we find the following passage: "I am not certain whether the event of the war, which our wise Ministers have at last declared, may not have induced them to beg you to continue your stay in India some time longer. I hope nothing, however, will prevent me from having the pleasure of seeing you next year, *supposing at that period that you have still a country to revisit.*"

Letter from Mr. Finers to General Lake, July 14th: "The invasion, which has been so long the favourite project of the First Consul, will certainly take place."

Letter from one of the Directors of the East India Company, Thomas Faulder, to Mr. J. Ferguson Smith, Calcutta, August 3d: "I have heard from the first authority, that if the French can land in Ireland with some troops, they will be immediately joined by one hundred thousand Irish."\*

Robert Emmet set out for Ireland in the beginning of October, 1802, and arrived in Dublin in the course of the same month. His brother, Thomas Addis, was then in Brussels. His father, the worthy Doctor Emmet, and his mother, were then residing at Casino, near Milltown; and here Robert remained some weeks in seclusion. Gradually and cautiously he put himself in communication with those whom he knew to be favourable to his enterprise—especially the old United Irishmen of '98. The principal persons concerned with him were—Thomas Russell, formerly Lieutenant of the Sixty-fourth Regiment of Foot; John Allen, of the firm of Allen and Hickson, woollen-drapers, Dame Street, Dublin; Philip Long, a general merchant, residing at No. 4 Crow Street; Henry William Hamilton (married to Russell's niece), of Enniskillen, barrister-at-law; William Dowdall, of Mullingar (natural son of Hussey Burgh, formerly Secretary to the Dublin Whig Club); Miles Byrne, of Wexford; Colonel Lumin, of the County Kildare; ——— Carthy, a gentleman farmer, of Kildare; Malachy Delany, the son of a landed proprietor, County Wicklow; the Messrs. Perrot, farmers, County Kildare; Thomas Wylde, cotton manufacturer, Cork Street; Thomas Lenahan, a farmer, of Crew Hill, County Kildare; John Hevey, a tobacconist, of Thomas Street; Denis Lambert Redmond, a coal factor, of Dublin; ——— Branagan, of Irishtown, timber merchant; Joseph Aliburn, of Kilmacud, Windy Harbour, a small landholder;

Thomas Frayne, a farmer, of Boven, County of Kildare; Nicholas Gray, of Wexford.\*

Some other persons of more humble rank, tradesmen, whose services would be required in the preparations, are enumerated by Doctor Madden:—James Hope, of County Antrim; Michael Quigley, a master bricklayer, of Rathcoffy, in the County Kildare; Henry Howley, a master carpenter, who had been engaged in the former rebellion; Felix Rourke, of Rathcoole, a clerk in a brewery in Dublin, who had been engaged in the former rebellion; Nicholas Stafford, a baker, of James Street; Bernard Duggan, a working cotton manufacturer, of the County Tyrone, who had been engaged in the former rebellion; Michael Dwyer, the well-known Wicklow insurgent, who, along with Holt and Miles Byrne, had kept up their resistance amidst the glens and mountains of Wicklow.

The plan of Robert Emmet's insurrection was, while agents were quietly organizing both the city and county, to make secret preparations in the city of Dublin itself;—then, when all was ready, to make one spring at the Castle, to seize upon the authorities, and give the signal for a general insurrection from Dublin Castle. There is good military authority for approving this plan of a rising in Ireland; and it certainly might have well succeeded but for one fatal accident. The gallant Miles Byrne, after many a campaign as a French officer, in every quarter of Europe, deliberately, in his latter days, avowed his preference for Emmet's scheme to every other that could be devised in the circumstances of Ireland. He says, in closing his own narrative of that part of his career:—

"I shall ever feel proud of the part I took with the lamented Robert Emmet. I have often asked myself, How could I have acted otherwise, seeing all his views and plans for the independence of my country so much superior to anything ever imagined before on the subject? They were only frustrated by accident, and the explosion of a dépôt; and, as I have always said, whenever Irishmen think of obtaining freedom, Robert Emmet's plans will be their best guide. First, to take the capital, and then the provinces will burst out and raise the same standard immediately."†

Myles Byrne himself, after being much sought after by the Government, on

\* Dr. Madden adds the names of Lord Wycombe and John Keogh, as favourable to the enterprise, not actually concerned in it.

† *Memoirs of Miles Byrne.* Paris.

\* The above extracts are given by Doctor Madden.—*U. I. Third Series*, p. 315.



account of his part in the Wexford insurrection, and after many escapes, was, in 1802, under a feigned name, employing himself as a measurer of timber in the timber-yard of his stepbrother, Kennedy; but still keeping up his connections with the remnant of Wexford rebels, and hoping for better times. Here, while he was one day measuring logs, news came of the Peace of Amiens. "I felt," he says, "unnerved and disappointed at the news of the peace. I had been living in hopes that, ere the war terminated, something good would be done for poor Ireland."

Soon after the arrival of Robert Emmet, we find him in close communication with Mr. Byrne.

In reporting their first conversation, Mr. Byrne gives his unimpeachable testimony with regard to the real views of Emmet, and his motives for engaging in the enterprise, and his anxious care to avoid French domination as well as to abolish that of England. The *Memoir* says:—

"Mr. Emmet soon told me his plans. He said he wished to be acquainted with all those who had escaped in the war of '98, and who continued still to enjoy the confidence of the people; that he had been inquiring since his return, and even at Paris. He was pleased to add that he had heard my name mentioned amongst them, &c. He entered into many details of what Ireland had to expect from France in the way of assistance, now that that country was so energetically governed by the First Consul, Buonaparte, who feared (he, Buonaparte) that the Irish people might be changed, and careless about their independence, in consequence of the union with England. It became obvious, therefore, that this impression should be removed as soon as possible. Robert Emmet told me the station his brother held in Paris, and that the different members of the Government there frequently consulted him. All of them were of opinion that a demonstration should be made by the Irish patriots to prove that they were as ready as ever to shake off the English yoke. To which Mr. Thomas Addis Emmet replied, it would be cruel to commit the poor Irish people again, and to drive them into another rebellion before they received assistance from France; but at the same time he could assure the French Government that a secret organization was then going on throughout Ireland, but more particularly in the city of Dublin, where large depôts of arms and of every kind of ammunition were preparing with the greatest secrecy, as none but the tried men of 1798 were

intrusted with the management of those stores and depôts.

"After giving me this explanation, Mr. Robert Emmet added: 'If the brave and unfortunate Lord Edward Fitzgerald and his associates felt themselves justified in seeking to redress Ireland's grievances by taking the field, what must not be our justification, now that not a vestige of self-government exists, in consequence of the accursed Union; that, until this most barbarous, fraudulent transaction took place, from time to time, in spite of corruption, useful local laws were enacted for Ireland? Now, seven-eighths of the population have no right to send a member of their body to represent them, even in a foreign Parliament; and the other eighth part of the population are the tools and taskmasters, acting for the cruel English Government and its Irish Ascendancy—a monster still worse, if possible, than foreign tyranny.'

"Mr. Emmet mentioned again the promises obtained from the chief of the French Government, given to himself, his brother, and other leaders, that in the event of a French army landing in Ireland, it should be considered as an auxiliary one, and received on the same principle as General Rochambeau and his army were received by the American people, when fighting for their independence. He added: 'That though no one could abhor more than he did the means by which the First Consul came to be at the head of the French nation, still he was convinced that this great military chief would find it his interest to deal fairly by the Irish nation, as the best and surest way to obtain his ends with England. He therefore thought the country should be organized and prepared for those great events, which were now inevitable. That as for himself, he was resolved to risk his life, and to stake the little fortune he possessed, for the accomplishment of those preparations so necessary for the redemption of our unfortunate country from the hands of a cruel enemy.'

It was while Mr. Emmet was making his preparations in Dublin that an English revolutionary conspiracy was detected and broken up in London. A certain Colonel Despard and thirty other persons were arrested, on a charge of high treason, at a public-house in Lambeth, the 15th of November, 1802. By some of the witnesses it appeared that Government was cognizant of the treasonable proceedings of Despard and his associates six months previous to their arrest; that spies were set on them, and suggested acts in some



cases to them, which were adopted; that they had printed pages to the following effect: "Constitution, the independence of Great Britain and Ireland; an equalization of civil, political, and religious rights; an ample provision for the families of the heroes who shall fall in the contest; a liberal reward for distinguished merit. These are the objects for which we contend. We swear to be united, in the awful presence of God."

February 7, 1803, Colonel Despard was tried at the Surrey Assizes, before Lord Ellenborough, on a charge of high treason, conspiring to *assassinate the King*, &c. Of this last charge there was no evidence; but it plainly appeared that Despard, as well as Robert Emmet, had been encouraged to make his attempt by the French Government, which very naturally desired to create for the English Government as much embarrassment as possible at home. Despard was convicted and hung.

In the meantime Emmet was quietly collecting arms and forming depôts of them at several points in Dublin. In January, 1803, his good father, Doctor Robert Emmet, died, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter's, Aungier Street. Robert could not even attend his father's funeral; because his presence in Dublin was intended to be a secret, and he knew there was a warrant for his apprehension in the hands of Major Sirr, since early in the year 1800.\* He was proceeding actively with his preparations. Miles Byrne and others were busy in getting pikes, pistols, and blunderbusses manufactured, and ammunition laid in. Emmet invented a species of explosive machines, consisting of beams of wood bored by a pump augur, and filled with powder and small stones, intended to be exploded in the face of advancing troops at the moment of action. Large quantities of pikes were forged and mounted, and carried from their places of manufacture to the depôts in hollow logs prepared for their reception, and which were drawn through the streets like ordinary lumber.

It is not a little strange that the Irish Government, usually so vigilant and suspicious, seems to have had no knowledge of these formidable arrangements. This was not for want of warnings, and report of spies; but the Government did not believe them. And it is no wonder that the executive was so incredulous, because there had not probably been one week for the past half century, when the

Government had not received some alarming intelligence of this nature. Plainly also the information was not so precise as to indicate persons and places, so that no interruption was given to the arrangements; and the 23d of July, 1803, was fixed for the outbreak.

Before that day arrived, a circumstance occurred which threatened to ruin all.

On the Saturday night week previous to the turn-out, an explosion of some combustibles took place in the depôt of Patrick Street, which gave some alarm in the neighbourhood. Major Sirr came to examine the house: previous to his coming, some one removed the remaining powder, arms, &c., and all the matters which were moveable in the place, notwithstanding some obstruction given by the watchman. Other arms were secreted on the premises, and were not discovered until some time afterwards. It was concluded that the affair was only some chemical process, which had accidentally caused the explosion.

The accident does not seem to have placed any serious obstacle in the way of the enterprise. Miles Byrne says:—

"Now, the final plan to be executed consisted principally in taking the Castle, whilst the Pigeon House, Island Bridge, the Royal Barracks, and the old Custom House Barracks were to be attacked, and if not surprised and taken, they were to be blockaded, and intrenchments thrown up before them. Obstacles of every kind to be created through the streets, to prevent the English cavalry from charging. The Castle once taken, undaunted men, materials, implements of every description, would be easily found in all the streets in the city, not only to impede the cavalry, but to prevent infantry from passing through them.

"As I was to be one of these persons designed to co-operate with Robert Emmet in taking the Castle of Dublin, I shall here relate precisely the part which was allotted to me in this daring enterprise. I was to have assembled early in the evening of Saturday, the 23d of July, 1803, at the house of Dennis Lambert Redmond, on the Coal Quay, the Wexford and Wicklow men, to whom I was to distribute pikes, arms, and ammunition; and then, a little before dusk, I was to send one of the men, well known to Mr. Emmet, to tell him that we were at our post, armed and ready to follow him; men were placed in the house in Ship Street, ready to seize on the entrance to the Castle on that side, at the same moment the principal gate would be taken.

\* Madden discovers this fact in *Sirr's Papers*, deposited in Trinity College Library.



“Mr. Emmet was to leave the dépôt at Thomas Street at dusk, with six hackney coaches, in each of which six men were to be placed, armed with jointed pikes and blunderbusses concealed under their coats. The moment the last of these coaches had passed Redmond’s house, where we were to be assembled, we were to sally forth and follow them quickly into the Castle Courtyard, and there to seize and disarm all the sentries, and to replace them instantly with our own men, &c.

“Emmet, after the explosion in Patriek Street, took up his abode in the dépôt in Marshalsea Lane. There he lay at night on a mattress, surrounded by all the implements of death, devising plans, turning over in his mind all the fearful chances of the intended struggle, well knowing that his life was at the mercy of upwards of forty individuals, who had been, or still were employed in the dépôts; yet confident of success, exaggerating its prospects, extenuating the difficulties which beset him, judging of others by himself, thinking associates honest who seemed to be so, confiding in their promises, and animated, or rather inflamed, by a burning sense of the wrongs of his country, and an enthusiasm in his devotion to what he considered its rightful cause.

“The morning of the 23d of July found Emmet and the leaders in whom he confided not of one mind; there was division in their councils, confusion in the dépôts, consternation among the citizens who were cognizant of what was going on, and treachery tracking Robert Emmet’s footsteps, dogging him from place to place, unseen, unsuspected, but perfidy nevertheless, embodied in the form of patriotism, employed in deluding its victim, making the most of its foul means of betraying its unwary victims, and counting already on the ultimate rewards of its treachery. Portion after portion of each plan of Robert Emmet was defeated, as he imagined, by accident, or ignorance, or neglect on the part of his agents. “But it never occurred to him,” says Madden, “that he was betrayed, that every design of his was frustrated, every project neutralized, as effectually as if an enemy had stolen into the camp.”

There is, however, no satisfactory evidence of treason on the part of any of those whom he trusted. The rest of this sad tale is soon told:—

Various consultations were held on the 23d, at the dépôt in Thomas Street, at Mr. Long’s, in Crow Street, and Mr. Allen’s, in College Green, and great diversity of opinion prevailed with respect to

the propriety of an immediate rising, or a postponement of the attempt. Emmet and Allen were in favour of the former, and, indeed, in the posture of their affairs, no other course was left, except the total abandonment of their project, which it is only surprising had not been determined on. The Wicklow men, under Dwyer, on whom great dependence was placed, had not arrived; the man who bore the order to him from Emmet neglected his duty, and remained at Rathfarnham. The Kildare men came in, and were informed, evidently by a traitor, that Emmet had postponed his attempt, and they went back at five o’clock in the afternoon. The Wexford men came in, and, to the number of two or three hundred, remained in town the early part of the night to take the part assigned to them, but they received no orders. A large body of men were assembled at the Broadstone, ready to act when the rocket signal agreed upon should be given, but no such signal was made.

It was evident that Emmet, to the last, counted on large bodies of men at his disposal, and that he was deceived. At eight o’clock in the evening he had eighty men nominally under his command, collected in the dépôt in Marshalsea Lane.

A man rushed in to announce that troops were at that moment marching upon them, which was not true; yet it seems to have been believed by Emmet and the rest. It was then he resolved to sally out, with such poor following as he had, march upon the Castle, and, if necessary, meet death by the way. Even this happiness—of dying with arms in his hands—was not reserved for the unfortunate gentleman.

The motley assembly of armed men, some of them intoxicated, marched along Thomas Street, with their unhappy leader at their head, who was endeavouring to maintain some order, with the assistance of Stafford, a man who remained close by him throughout this scene, and faithful to the last. It was now about half-past nine, and quite dark. The sequel is painful to tell; yet it must be told. Doctor Madden says:—

“The stragglers in the rear soon commenced acts of pillage and assassination. The first murderous attack committed in Thomas Street was not that made on Lord Kilwarden, as we find by the following account in a newspaper of the day.

“A Mr. Leech, of the Custom House, was passing through Thomas Street in a hackney coach, when he was stopped by the rabble; they dragged him out of the



coach without any inquiry; it seemed enough that he was a respectable man; he fell on his knees, implored their mercy, but all in vain; they began the work of blood, and gave him a frightful pike wound in the groin. Their attention was then diverted from their humbler victim by the approach of Lord Kilwarden's coach. Mr. Leech then succeeded in creeping to Vicar Street watch-house, where he lay a considerable time apparently dead from loss of blood, but happily recovered from his wound."

Now, of all the judges, and other high official persons in Ireland in those days, not one was so estimable, so good and humane, as Lord Kilwarden, Chief Justice of the King's Bench. He had often stood between an innocent prisoner and the death to which his enemies had already doomed him. Most unfortunately, just as the mad mob of rioters had got beyond the control of their leader, and had already dipped their hands in blood, a private carriage was seen moving along that part of Thomas Street which leads to Vicar Street. It was stopped and attacked; Lord Kilwarden, who was inside, with his daughter and his nephew, the Rev. Richard Wolfe, cried out: "It is I, Kilwarden, Chief Justice of the King's Bench." A man, whose name is said to have been Shannon, rushed forward, plunged his pike into his lordship, crying out: "You are the man I want." A portmanteau was then taken out of the carriage, broken open and rifled of its contents; then his lordship, mortally wounded, was dragged out of the carriage, and several additional wounds inflicted on him. His nephew endeavoured to make his escape, but was taken, and put to death. The unfortunate young lady remained in the carriage, till one of the leaders rushed forward, took her from the carriage, and led her through the rabble to an adjoining house; and it is worthy of observation, that in the midst of this scene of sanguinary tumult, no injury or insult was offered to her, or attempted to be offered to her, by the infuriated rabble. Mr. Fitzgerald states that the person who rescued her from her dreadful situation was Robert Emmet.

Miss Wolfe, after remaining some time in the place of refuge she was placed in, proceeded on foot to the Castle, and entered the Secretary's office in a distracted state, and is said to have been the first bearer of the intelligence of her father's murder. Lord Kilwarden was found lying on the pavement dreadfully and mortally wounded. When the street was cleared of the insurgents, he was car-

ried almost lifeless to the watch-house in Vicar Street.

This foul murder was an atrocity really horrible. Reasons have been assigned or suggested for it, as that the man who first attacked him had had a relative sentenced to death by him; that he was mistaken for Lord Carleton, a very different kind of judge, &c.; but the odious deed stands out in all its bloody horror; no better—but also no worse—than many of the outrages done upon the people in '98, by Orange yeomanry and Ascendancy magistrates.

Doctor Madden thus narrates the close of this dreadful affair:—

"Emmet halted his party at the market-house, with the view of restoring order, but tumult and insubordination prevailed. During his ineffectual efforts, word was brought that Lord Kilwarden was murdered; he retraced his steps, proceeded towards the scene of the barbarous outrage, and in the course of a few minutes returned to his party. From that moment he gave up all hope of effecting any national object. He saw that his attempt had merged into a work of pillage and murder. He, and a few of the leaders who were about him, abandoned their project and their followers. A detachment of the military made its appearance at the corner of Cutpurse Row, and commenced firing on the insurgents, who immediately fled in all directions. The rout was general in less than an hour from the time they sallied forth from the dépôt. The only place where anything like resistance was made was on the Coombe, where Colonel Brown was killed, and two members of the Liberty Rangers, Messrs. Edmonston and Parker. The guard-house of the Coombe had been unsuccessfully attacked, though with great determination: a great many dead bodies were found there."

The whole affair was now over, and all was lost; yet during this night, Miles Byrne, with his two hundred picked Wexford men, was in the house on Coal Quay, anxiously awaiting the orders that had been agreed upon. Dwyer was ready with another party; and the Kildare men were expecting to be summoned by a messenger. They were all left without orders.

The next day was, of course, a time of arrests, discoveries, and domiciliary visits in Dublin. The several dépôts were examined, and quantities of uniforms, fire-arms, and several thousand pikes, were found; together with eight thousand copies of two proclamations intended for distribution on the day of the rising.



These documents declare that the object of the movement is an Irish Republic, separation from England, and freedom and justice for all. (See Appendix, No. IV.) Emmet went out to a private house at Rathfarnham. Within a week before his sad failure, he had sent Russell and James Hope to the north, upon whose people he placed great reliance, and he requested Miles Byrne to go to France with dispatches for his brother, Thomas Addis Emmet, which Byrne, after many adventures, accomplished. Emmet himself proceeded from Rathfarnham to the Wicklow mountains, where he found the Wicklow insurgents bent on prosecuting their plans, and making an immediate attack on some of the principal towns in that county. Emmet, to his credit, being then convinced of the hopelessness of the struggle, had determined to withhold his sanction from any further effort; convinced, as he then was, that it could only lead to the effusion of blood, but to no successful issue. His friends pressed him to take immediate measures for effecting his escape, but unfortunately he resisted their solicitations. He had resolved on seeing one person before he could make up his mind to leave the country, and that person was dearer to him than life—Sarah Curran, the youngest daughter of the celebrated advocate, John Philpot Curran. With the hope of obtaining an interview with her, if possible, before his intended departure—of corresponding with her—and of seeing her pass by Harold's Cross, which was the road from her father's country-house, near Rathfarnham, to Dublin, he returned to his old lodgings at Mrs. Palmer's, Harold's Cross. Here, on the 25th of August, he was arrested, at about seven o'clock in the evening, by Major Sirr, who, according to the newspaper accounts, "did not know his person till he was brought to the Castle, *where he was identified by a gentleman of the College.*"\*

On Monday, September 19, 1803, at a special commission, before Lord Norbury, Mr. Baron George, and Mr. Baron Daly, Robert Emmet was put on his trial, on a charge of high treason, under 25th Edward III. The counsel assigned him were Messrs. Ball, Burrowes, and M'Nally.

The counsel for the prosecution were Mr. Standish O'Grady, Attorney-General, and William Conyngham Plunket, King's Counsel. There is nothing specially worthy of remark on the trial, except the very bitter and superfluous speech of Mr.

Plunket. Mr. Plunket had been the friend of Emmet's father. It was the political doctrine so loudly announced by Mr. Plunket in his Anti-Union speeches—that the Union would leave Ireland without any constitution or law which men would be bound to obey—it was this, and other eloquent denunciations, which had so deeply sunk into Emmet's mind, that he at length resolved to put those doctrines in practice, at the risk of his life. This could only be done by expelling the British authorities from his country.

It is true that Mr. Plunket, if he practised his profession at all, was bound to take the brief for the Crown; but he was not bound to display a furious and vindictive zeal in prosecuting his friend's son, especially as the prisoner made no defence. When the witnesses for the prosecution had all been examined, Mr. M'Nally said, as Mr. Emmet did not intend to call any witness, or to take up the time of the Court by his counsel stating any case or making any observations on the evidence, he presumed the trial was now closed on both sides.

Mr. Plunket declined following the example of the prisoner's counsel, and launched into a most violent and needless philippic, ending with this passionate imprecation:—

"They imbrue their hands in the most sacred blood of the country, and yet they call upon God to prosper their cause as it is just! But as it is atrocious, wicked, and abominable, I must devoutly invoke that God to confound and overwhelm it."

How nobly Emmet asserted himself and his cause, in his last speech, is known to all who read our language. There exist at least ten editions of that speech, some of them varying materially from others. The latest, and probably most correct version of it, is that contained in Doctor Madden's *Memoir of Emmet*, in the third series of his Collections. Thomas Moore, in his Diary, February 15, 1831, mentions Burrowes having remarked to him, on the subject of Plunket's conduct in Emmet's case: "Plunket could not have refused the brief of Government, *though he might have avoided, perhaps, speaking to evidence.* It was not true, I think he said, that Plunket had been acquainted with young Emmet. The passage in a printed speech of Emmet, where he is made to call Plunket '*that viper*,' &c., was never spoken by Emmet."

On the 20th of September he was executed. The same morning the death of his mother was announced to him in his prison. Early in the afternoon he was

\* Madden says this was Doctor Elrington, Provost of the College.



removed, attended by a strong guard, both of cavalry and infantry, to Thomas Street, where a scaffold and gibbet had been erected. He died with the utmost calmness and fortitude.

It is said that Robert Emmet had been made acquainted with a design that was in contemplation to effect his escape at the time and place appointed for execution. Of that design Government appears to have had information, and had taken precautionary measures, which had probably led to its being abandoned. The avowed object of Thomas Russell's going to Dublin, after his failure in the north, was to adopt plans for this purpose.

Russell, the close friend and associate both of Tone and Emmet, was himself soon after arrested, and executed at Downpatrick; and this was the end of the United Irishmen,—at least for that generation. Russell's burial slab is to be seen in a churchyard of Downpatrick, with no word on it but the simple name "Thomas Russell." Robert Emmet's tomb is still uninscribed.—*End of Mr. Mitchel's History of the Rebellion.*

## CHAPTER XVII.

BY JOHN FERGUSON.

THE insurrection was over, the union was accomplished, and Ireland was more completely in the hands of England than at any time since six centuries before Strongbow landed upon her shores. Force, fraud, and terror, had accomplished their work, and a nation containing 5 million of people, which had been progressing in agriculture, wealth, manufactures, and population under the Parliament of '82 with a rapidity "unsurpassed by any people on the globe," as Lord Chancellor Clare, Under Secretary Cooke, and other advocates of the union freely admitted in the debates, was now to have her affairs managed in an alien Parliament, where her representation was to be only one in seven, though her population was five to twelve. "Do not unite with us," said Dr. Johnson, "or we will rob you; we would have robbed the Scotch but that they had nothing to be robbed of." When we consider how for the previous century every trade that developed in Ireland was mercilessly suppressed by English Acts of Parliament, until the armed volunteers in '82 won a measure of freedom for their Parliament, it is clear Johnson spoke from sound data-

knowledge of the past. But the English ministers and their West British allies declared again and again that great as had been Ireland's prosperity under its National Parliament, the prosperity under the British Parliament would be even greater. Ninety-seven years have passed, and every year has marked decay in our unhappy land. England had then 10,900,000 people; she has to-day 31,000,000. Ireland had then 5,000,000; she has to-day about 4,600,000. Almost every year a Coercion Bill, violating some essential principle of liberty, has been forced by the British Parliament upon the Irish people. Of late years a perpetual Coercion Act has been inflicted upon the country. At times we have had nearly 1,000 persons imprisoned, without trial, as "suspects." These have been, as in '81 and '82, "the very cream of the Irish race," to use Mr. Gladstone's description of the "Fenians," Members of Parliament, Priests, Town Councillors, Magistrates, Mayors, High Sheriffs, Journalists, Farmers, Artizans, the best manhood of the country were all shut up during the pleasure of British ministers. What for? Because they advocated passive resistance to the Landlord garrison which was driving the population to foreign lands and turning their country into a wilderness. Because they counselled the people to practice British Trades' Union methods, admitted to be legal in England, towards the traitors to their country who took farms from which people had been evicted for non-payment of rents which had ceased to be possible. Because they held and taught that inasmuch as in Ireland the Landlords had not spent as Earl Spencer, a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, said upon improvements in Ireland, a sum that would not be fairly paid by a rent of 6d. per acre; and that as the farmers of Ireland, unlike those of Britain, had created everything in or on the land—drains, ditches, houses—they had a right to resist eviction from their farms and houses as men have a right to resist thieves or bandits. Since then, after years of struggle, sacrifice, death in their country's cause, the people have extorted from England, as the women in Scripture did from the unjust Judge, not by the justice of the cause, but by being troublesome, the concession of the principle for which they struggled, and Land Courts which pretend to carry it out.

But Britain has not yet grasped the principle I had the honour and pleasure



to quote when I was for some hours in the witness-box under Sir Henry James's cross examination at the Parnell Commission. It is the principle laid down by Bushe, subsequently Chief Justice of Ireland, and by Saurin, subsequently Attorney General, "that to pass the Union by fraud, oppression, and unconstitutional practices, it might be made binding in law, but it would not be obligatory upon conscience; it would be obeyed as long as England was strong, but resistance to it will be an abstract duty, and the expression of that resistance will be a mere question of prudence." Till the British people realise that this is not only sound in moral and political law, but is deep down in the hearts of 20 million of the Irish race; until the British people grasp the fact that the Irish are not, though they can very easily be made, loyal citizens of the British Empire, we shall not arrive at that condition of mind that will permit of that real union in which the Irish people will drop into the grave of the bad past all bitter memories, and make a fresh start as free citizens of an integral portion of the Empire, protected in all purely Irish matters by their own National Parliament, and duly represented in an Imperial Parliament in which they will be bound by every moral and constitutional principle to contribute their fair share to the strength and integrity of the Empire.

The loss to the Empire by the insolent and ignorant violation of Mill's principle—"That no nation, however benevolent its intention, can rule another as well as that other could rule itself," is immense. Passing over the injury to Ireland for a moment, see what is happening. From every part of Britain an increasing civilisation is creating new wants—sanitary, commercial, railway, telephone, telegraph, water, &c., and sending up hundreds of Bills to Parliament demanding immediate attention. Some of these Bills cost years of local work and thousands of pounds to formulate. By some of them the lives of thousands may be made, perhaps, ten years longer. By some of them a trade will be opened abroad or saved from ruin at home. Upon the ability of Parliament to meet the various and increasing demands for legislation depends the future position of this Empire, which has so long, and apart from Ireland, upon the whole, though with some terrible faults, led well the van of the world's progress.

But not one of these Bills can have the attention either in time or amount the country requires, and most of them have to take the chance of a ballot whether they come before the Parliament at all! All this is the result of the dogged and ignorant refusal of the English people to adopt division of labour in Government and legislation. A Parliament that was efficient one hundred years ago, as such philosophers as Mill, De Tocquville, Freeman, and the experience of the Swiss, United States, British Dominion, and other federations prove, cannot meet the requirements of modern civilisation. As well might our great commercial concerns with 10, 20, or 50 departments, each independent in its management, and judged only by its results in the counting-house, attempt to run with one manager as a homogeneous business does, or even as a small business of different departments might. Now, were there no Irish question, it is certain Britain would have long since delegated legislative powers to Scotland and Wales, and confined the Imperial Parliament to imperial duties; but Repeal and Home Rule, though in no correct sense political party questions, were made such by national prejudices. We are unable to-day to obtain for the reform these terms indicate, impartial consideration. But the Irish people will not be cleared off their native land, like Maories from New Zealand, if the Irish race can prevent it. British intentions may be very good towards the Irish people. We must judge them by their fruits. Every year our population decreases, and our country produces less wealth. No nation in the world's history was ever reduced from 9 millions to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  under the rule of the Pagan or the Turk. I do not believe there is a man in England who wishes evil to Ireland or the Irish. I believe it is the earnest desire of England to do Ireland good, but the English will not open their eyes to the philosophy of the question—i.e., their inability to do Ireland good, and the necessity to permit her to do good (or evil) to herself. "Better," says Mill, "for a people to go wrong in the exercise of liberty than to go right by the rule and will of others." In the exercise of liberty, responsibility and experience operate, and habits of self-reliance are developed, but when only acting by the will of another power, a people must become emasculated and incapable of self-action. Knowing this, the Irish nation must fight for its



existence, and England must be coerced if she cannot be convinced.

Can then 4 million Irish people coerce England? I say yes! Not, certainly, if the Irish claim were unjust. Not if it were one injurious to England or the Empire; but being neither, Ireland can win self-government, as she won every concession, by sacrifice, suffering, and by giving desperate proof she is not conquered. She can "ring chapel bells"—to use Mr. Gladstone's words—and find other English statesmen "to avert danger from the Empire" by doing justice to Ireland and completing the union of hearts. But to the method which now lies before Irish Nationalists. The theory of a Free Parliament implies a National homogeneity. There must be a loyalty to the National or Imperial idea which will cause every portion of the people to subordinate any individual or class interest to the common good. England and France are examples of such a homogeneity. An English Parliament could have in it no member who would be permitted by his constituency to deliberately obstruct business or work against English interests. But England has forced Ireland to send 103 members into her Parliament who are no part of her homogeneity—who care nothing about her welfare under present conditions, and 86 of whom would, in fighting for their own country, utterly disregard all English interests. England knows this, but dare not disgrace herself by expelling these members and ruling Ireland openly, as she rules India, by force. So she suffers the increasing disadvantages I have pointed out in inability to obtain the legislation her people require. Now the Irish people see more clearly, day by day, their power. Eighty-six men, true to Parnell's policy, without any obstruction that would differ in appearance from ordinary participation in all debates, by pressing their country's claims for redress of numerous obvious evils, can reduce this so-called Free Parliament to a condition of impotency. This will, indeed, be the plagues of Egypt upon the Pharaoh who will not let this people go. Again the clouds of war are gathering. Britain to-day has not one friend amongst the nations. In case of war with any country 50,000 armed men must remain in Ireland. Not one could be spared. There is one great country which might easily be made the friend of Britain. It is

the Great Republic, with its 60 millions of people. The Irish people are the political power in that country.

See, then, the price England pays for her hypocritical pretence of governing Ireland in accordance with the principles of her own glorious constitution. By degrees her Parliament, so well called "the mother of Free Parliaments," is becoming enslaved. "Closure" and other arbitrary rules of procedure, which would have horrified constitutional giants like Burke or Brougham, Chatham or Russell, are now the every day practice. The newspaper-led bourgeoisie, who now control, and run a fair chance of ruining the Empire by their "Gospel of Greed" and principles of "devil-take the hindmost competition"—defend the enslavement of Parliament on the ground that "these Irish members must be curtailed in their privileges of wasting time!" But then the privileges of other members, necessary for the proper transaction of British business, have to be curtailed also! Members of the homogeneity, loyal to the Parliament, who would at once give way in the exercise of their privileges for the common good, six hundred, who could not be suspected of disloyal obstruction, are deprived of their right and duty of opposition, suggestion, or amendment, in order that 86, who neither owe nor own loyalty to the Parliament as constituted, may be suppressed. Henry Grattan, musing over the disaster to his country which he foresaw in the Legislative Union, said, savagely, Ireland would send 100 scoundrels to the English Parliament to torment and injure. Grattan did not perceive what the council of the Home Rule Association saw in 1873, when at the great convention we laid it down that 100 honest patriots concerned with Ireland's right to the restoration of her Parliament alone, as they had a right to be, would be a more formidable foe to English rule in Ireland than 100 scoundrels. Both sorts have been tried. Up till 1873, what with "Orange Brigades" and "Popes' Brass Bands," Grattan's idea was not badly carried out. Castlereagh and John Sadleir did not badly approximate to the one political category, whilst Isaac Butt and Charles Stuart Parnell did not badly approximate to the other. The Irish Nation sees the line of action and will pursue it. It is a sad business. We have the elements of a strong federation in these islands.



There is scarcely an Irishman who would not join heart and hand in serving the Empire as loyally as any Englishman if the National Parliament were restored. The present state of things compels us, even when it is against our strong inclinations, to be, as Mr. Butt puts it, "a reluctant rebel in England's rear, with a hand uplifted and ready to strike." Truly, as the Scripture says, "Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge."

But is our mood of serious importance to England? Let us see. For many years past England's humiliations have all or chiefly come from the United States. Again and again that powerful people has given insults and perpetrated wrongs upon England, to which she had to submit. Take two instances out of a dozen. A claim, I have no hesitation in calling absurd by the laws of nations up till that date, was made by the United States for compensation for injury done by the Alabama. The British Government replied it would not even discuss the matter. England was the judge of her own "Foreign Enlistment Acts," &c., &c. The British Press uttered its war-whoop of triumph, and reminded the United States how the "Grand Admiral" was built for Russia during the Crimean War, and when Britain asked for compensation the answer was—"We build ships for all people as a commercial nation, and don't ask what is done with them after they leave our shores." The United States dropped the matter just then, but I ventured to say on various platforms, "The British Government has not done with the question; it will be discussed, and the money demanded will be paid. Irishmen in the United States won't lose sight of this question, and Britain *will* not only discuss, but *pay* that unjust claim." Well, a few years after American Politicians adopted the election cry—"Make England pay the Alabama claims," and £3,000,000 were paid! But the other day an English demand upon Venezuela was made, in my opinion justly; it was refused. A time was given, at end of which Britain declared her warships would collect the indemnity; but the United States Government, urged on by Irish Nationalists, and knowing how popular it is to insult England, told Lord Salisbury they would require to constitute a Court, partly British and partly American, to go into the matter. Lord Salisbury

very properly told the United States it was no affair of theirs, but a matter between two independent powers. The United States haughtily replied they would constitute a Court themselves, at which England might appear as a claimant, and whatever decision was arrived at the United States would enforce it! So Salisbury after refusing to be part of the Court himself, comes humbly into it asking the United States to give him justice against Venezuela! It was amusing to read the back-down in the English papers over this. We had the usual cant about the horrors of war between the two branches of the great Anglo-Saxon peoples; the wickedness of shedding the blood of kinsmen for the sake of some money due by a den of Spanish and Half-Breed thieves, calling itself a Republic in South America, and 99 out of every 100 Englishmen never had a chance of seeing the real facts and moral of the matter, or were too press-ridden to give them attention.

Now this has gone on till France, Germany, and Russia appear to have learned the lesson, and they are evidently determined to ignore the claims of Britain whenever they come into collision with theirs. Neither Salisbury's nor any other Government could restrain the fighting instincts of the British people once they see and feel they are being insulted and wronged. But like gallant France, robbed and demoralised by "the ruffian Louis Napoleon" and his "gang of black-legs," England might find herself—though from other causes than the personal corruption of her rulers—utterly unprepared to face a war with the combination evidently organising against her, and her humiliation might be as complete as that of France in her last war. As an extreme Irish Nationalist, bound to be upon my country's side even though that implied the humiliation of England, yet I say I would regard that with feelings of horror, only inferior to the feelings of horror with which I regard the steady and continuous humiliation and destruction of Ireland by England. I am aware many Irish Nationalists will say the ruin of England would not fret them much, and some, into whose souls iron wrongs have deeply entered, would say, may that ruin come as retributive justice. But I think the majority of educated Irishmen see to-day that from geographical position, mixture of peoples, historical relation,



identity of interests in relation to other nations, adaptation to produce commodities for each other and various economic causes, Ireland could enjoy within the Empire, under "Home Rule," a higher social condition than that of "absolute separation" with its warring tariffs, armed watchfulness, foreign intrigues, contentious questions arising out of past relations, &c., &c. Yet I hold that "absolute separation" would stop the ruin of Ireland, and give a very high condition of prosperity. So if Ireland cannot obtain National Self-Government within the Empire, it is the duty of all her children, at home or abroad, to take any chance that offers to obtain it outside the Empire, which her blood and treasure have done so much to build up.

By history traced on dungeon walls,  
By scaffolds, chains, and exiles' tears,  
Slow marking, as the shadow falls,  
The mournful sequence of the years;  
By genius crushed, and progress barred,  
By noble aspirations marred,  
Till with a smouldering fire's life  
They burn in deadly hate and strife—  
I ask you, rulers of our land,  
Have ye done well for Ireland?

England is beginning to realise she is without a single friend amongst the nations. She is confessing for the first time in her history inability to cope in arms with a possible, indeed a suspected combination—France, Germany, and Russia. It is no longer doubted that the United States are a source of danger. It is at last admitted that the Irish 12 millions of that great Republic create the bad feeling that at times displays itself against England. British statesmen say we have got to accept that fact. Now, what does all this situation point to? Atonement to Ireland for the past and reconciliation! This will not be difficult, for a national defect from which Ireland has suffered again and again is a generous readiness to forget past wrongs and trust kind promises. Hugh O'Neil, Henry Grattan, and Daniel O'Connell proved this in the past, and it looks at present as if the Liberal party that induced "the weak race unworthy the blessing" to cast their conquering leader, Parnell, to the wolves, is about to abandon the promise by which it induced the great desertion of that all-conquering chief who was the centre of our national unity. But be that as it may, the best ally England can find to-day is Ireland. Let the National Parliament declare to the world that Ireland is once again under

the control in all purely national matters of her own freely elected Parliament; that she is fairly represented in the Imperial Parliament for Imperial purposes; that she is now like one of the States in the American Union—in complete control of her own resources and revenue, and bound to contribute to the defence and integrity of the Empire in fair and reasonable proportion. Let this go forth from the Irish Parliament with a call to the Irish race to forget the past and sustain the new Union. This call will not be in vain. Ireland can win the United States to be a true and powerful friend of the Empire. In every land the Irish millions will respond to the demand of their country's Parliament. Then let the despots of Europe combine if they will. 50,000 men will be free for foreign service, who, as matters stand, must remain in Ireland; and, reduced though our nation is, I doubt not 200,000 recruits will muster rapidly under the green flag to sustain the honour of their nation and ratify its compact, and, if the despots of Europe will have it, Irish bayonets will redden in the front of another decisive battle of the world, by which baptism of blood ancient wrongs shall be forgotten, and a future of unity and peace between England and Ireland shall date from that day of common triumph.

And now I come to the answer to a question put every day by British and West British people, What great wrong is Ireland suffering from to-day which justifies the disaffection of the Irish people, or the charge that English rule is the cause of her yearly decline?

Irish financial experts have been for fifty years pointing out that the taxation of Ireland was unfair and ruinous. This was met with insulting mockery or *ad captandum vulgus*, economic fallacies. At last a Royal Commission was extorted, consisting of men of the highest standing, British and Irish. Before it came the Treasury experts—Sir Robert Giffen, Sir E. Hamilton, Dr. Grimshaw, and others. A report appeared, from which I give the following unquestioned and unquestionable figures:—The income of Great Britain is £1,530,000,000 per annum. The income of Ireland is £70,000,000 per annum. Before taxes can be got from any man cost of subsistence must be deducted. You cannot tax either man or beast below subsistence, or you will soon have



neither to tax. Giffen and others fix £12 per head per annum as the subsistence first charge. With this deducted the annual income of the two countries stand to each other as 15 does to 1,092 or 1 to 73. Ireland by this calculation should only pay about £1,000,000 per annum instead of £8,000,000. And as the population of Britain is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  times as great as Ireland, it follows each Briton should pay 10 times as much as each Irishman. This would be the case if exact fairness and separate capacity were to be considered; but I will give the finding of the Commission, though in my opinion unfair towards Ireland. When the subsistence figure £12 is deducted it is found each Irishman has about £3 and each Briton £30 left as the true taxable income, or, say, £15 per each Irish, as against £150 per each English family. The Imperial and local taxes of Ireland are £2, 9s. 6d. per head. Thus, of the entire production of wealth from every source, only 10s. 6d. per head is left to Ireland as a trading capital. The British taxation, local and Imperial, amounts to some £3, 4s. per head, so each Briton is left in possession of £26, 16s. per annum of the wealth production of the country. The finding of the Commission was that Ireland pays £2,750,000 per annum more than her "relative taxable capacity." Giffen has declared that the drain upon her resources was so great no capital was left to start industries or cultivate her fields, and that her people must continue to emigrate, and her cultivated acres to decrease. This ruinous over-taxation has gone on for nearly fifty years. It should be kept ever in mind that the common newspaper method of disposing of the alleged plunder of Ireland, by pointing out how much less per head the Irish pay than the English, is one of the stupid fallacies which only anonymous writers would perpetrate. A moment's thought, if people would think, would show that the Duke of Westminster's gardener might only pay £2 per annum and his master £10,000 per annum in taxes, and yet the gardener would be the more heavily taxed.

Again, if we take the Irish income at £15 per head, and the English at £42, when we deduct the subsistence charge at £12, leaving £3 and £30 as the taxable incomes, we must keep in mind it would be more difficult for the Irishman to pay 6s. per annum

than for the Englishman to pay £3! Pitt very fairly pointed out at the Union that a person with double the income of another could pay with greater ease several times as much taxation. A person with £50 per annum would feel the pinch of a £3 tax much more than a person with £100 would feel, say, £12.

The following is of value and interest. I quote from a valuable pamphlet, edited by Alfred Webb, on *The Over-taxation of Ireland*. (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers & Walker.) The Commission on the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland was appointed in May, 1894. It consisted of—The Right Hon. Hugh C. E. Childers (since deceased); Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, The Right Hon. O'Connor Don, Sir Robert G. C. Hamilton (since deceased); Sir Thomas Sutherland, K.C. M.G., M.P.; Sir David Barbour, K.C. S.I.; The Hon. Edward Blake, M.P.; Bertram W. Currie, Esq.; W. A. Hunter, Esq., M.P.; C. E. Martin, Esq.; J. E. Redmond, Esq., M.P.; Thomas Sexton, Esq., M.P.; Henry F. Slaterry, Esq.; G. W. Wolff, Esq., M.P.

The following were the terms of reference:—"To inquire into the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and their relative taxable capacity, and to report:—1. Upon what principles of comparison, and by the application of what specific standards, the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation may be most equitably determined. 2. What, so far as can be ascertained, is the true proportion, under the principles and specific standards so determined, between the taxable capacity of Great Britain and Ireland. 3. The history of the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland at and after the Legislative Union, the charge for Irish purposes on the Imperial Exchequer during that period, and the amount of Irish Taxation remaining available for contribution to Imperial expenditure; also the Imperial expenditure to which it is considered equitable that Ireland should contribute."

The Commission reported late last year, and the result was laid before Parliament in a Blue Book, with accompanying two volumes of evidence. Of the thirteen surviving Commissioners, eleven (The O'Connor Don, Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, Mr. Blake, Mr. Currie, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Martin, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Slaterry, Mr. Wolff) agreed as follows:—



"I. That Great Britain and Ireland must, for the purpose of this inquiry, be considered as separate entities.

"II. That the Act of Union imposed upon Ireland a burden which, as events showed, she was unable to bear.

"III. That the increase of taxation laid upon Ireland between 1853 and 1860 was not justified by the then existing circumstances.

"IV. That identity of rates of taxation does not necessarily involve equality of burden.

"V. That whilst the actual tax revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of that of Great Britain the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is very much smaller, and is not estimated by any of us as exceeding one-twentieth."

The difference between this one-eleventh and one-twentieth amounts to about £2,750,000 per annum extra taxation.

The Hon. Edward Blake, M.P., on the 29th March, 1897, spoke in the House of Commons as follows:—

"First let me ask the House to consider the gravity of the issue; and let me emphasise it by a brief enumeration of some startling facts, new and old, collected by the Commission. For almost a century Britain has ruled Ireland under the Union. I ask British members to recall the economic conditions of the two islands—the ruling and the ruled. They should give pause before the dismissal of our plaint.

"Take population. It is a great test, and involves a great element of strength. At the beginning Ireland had five millions against a little over ten millions in Britain. She has now four and a-half millions, less by half a million, or 10 per cent. of a loss in the century. Britain has now thirty-four millions, having increased by twenty-four millions, or 240 per cent. Had Ireland increased proportionately she would have had over sixteen millions; her relative loss is eleven and a-half millions. She had half as many; she has little more than one-eighth of Britain. But even this view is inadequate. Only half a century ago Ireland had eight and a-half millions. She lost two millions directly and indirectly through the famine; and since then so many more that, after eliminating the natural increase, her population has actually diminished by four millions, or 47 per cent. in half a century, an absolutely unexampled condition. Britain half a century ago

had twenty millions; she has increased by fourteen millions, or 70 per cent. A proportionate Irish increase would make an Irish population of over fourteen millions. Her relative loss is near ten millions, or 70 per cent. in half a century.

"Take next the condition of the people. Of this dreadfully reduced population there are large masses whose scale of existence is far below that of the corresponding masses of Britain; while Britain's increased numbers enjoy a steady and rapid advance in the standard of comfort.

"In Britain the scale of living and the margin available for emergencies make famine unknown and impossible. In Ireland the scale is so low and the margin so narrow that even a single bad crop tends in important areas to famine, necessitating public aid. In 1879-1880, in 1886, in 1891, in 1894, you were obliged to pass Relief of Distress Acts for Ireland. In England there is no Congested Districts Board. In Ireland one-sixth of the country and near one-eighth of the population are thus dealt with. The average Poor-Law valuation of the area is £1, 0s. 2d. Many equally poor districts are excluded from the Act. There is painful evidence of chronic penury and want in those parts; reports which, if they could be alleged of a British district, would absolutely appal this House.

"Britain imports from Ireland and abroad for her masses vast quantities of the best foods, in addition to what she raises. Ireland raises great supplies of the best foods, which she is obliged largely to export to Britain, and to replace by inferior commodities, Indian corn and American bacon—the best her poverty-stricken masses can afford to use. Ireland is, in proportion to population, the fourth meat producer in the world, but only the sixteenth meat consumer. For England the conditions are reversed. She is the sixteenth meat producer, but the fourth meat consumer.

"The average Poor-Law valuation of all Ireland is under £3, about equal to the poorest East London union. The paupers of Ireland were per 1,000 in 1864, 52; of Britain, 49; nearly equal proportions. In 1895 they were in Ireland 95, being nearly doubled; for Britain, 26, being almost halved. From equality they have become near 4 to 1; an increase, however, partly due to the assimilation of the systems as to out-door relief.



"Now, the tax revenue of Ireland in 1820 was 14s. 5d. per head; in 1894, 28s. 10d., or twice as great. That of Britain was, in the earlier year, £3, 10s. 3d; in the later, £2, 4s. 10d., or nearly one-third less. The total taxation in Ireland, including rates, had largely increased in 1850, and was then £1 per head; in 1880, £2; in 1894, £2, 8s. 10d; now, £2, 11s. 11d. Her tax revenue last year was £7,074,000, and the rate per head was £1, 15s. 1d.—the highest yet.

"But, Sir, the taxation on commodities presses with greater relative as well as absolute severity on Ireland. In Britain, the tax revenue on commodities, which alone affects the masses, in 1820 was, per head, about £2, 8s.; in 1894 it was about £1, 4s., or half the old rate; and this kind is now about 53 per cent. of her total taxation. The Irish taxation on commodities in 1820 was, per head, about 11s.; in 1894 about £1, 2s., or double the old rate; and this comprises 76 per cent. of her total taxation; and her rate, per head, is now almost equal to that of Great Britain, though the Irish consumption is considerably less.

"The total tax revenue of Ireland is now, including rates, over eleven millions, while her yearly resources are, as I conceive, much under seventy millions; out of which are to be paid, having regard to the ease of the masses—(1) taxation; (2) agricultural rents; including the large economic drain in favour of absentee landlords and mortgagees; besides the first charge of all—namely, the subsistence of the masses—say nearly four and a-half millions of people. This makes clearly a condition of extraordinary pressure on the means of subsistence. Taxation must, in bad years, have more than exhausted the surplus, and so the capital has diminished. It is, as I have said, near double the maximum relative capacity. It has now been shown to be beyond the reasonable actual capacity. And the contrast between Ireland and Britain, with her 1,400 millions of income, is too obvious to need restatement. That is true which Senior proved in 1864, that, considering capacity, England is the most lightly, while Ireland is the most heavily taxed of countries.

"It is said, Sir, that it is the whiskey-tax of which we complain. There is a serious grievance of inequality to which I shall have to refer. But, apart from that, our complaint is of the excessive taxes which are on more than whiskey—

which are on tea, tobacco, and beer as well. You will see by the evidence as to the poorest districts—for example, Donegal—by the poor little family budgets which have been presented, so affecting in the narrowness and bareness of the lives they depict, that but little whiskey is drunk there; tea and tobacco are the only relief.

"Then it is said that the whiskey-tax is a tax on excess—on the drunkard. The right. hon. member for Bodmin used the same argument, saying that if too much money comes from Ireland it is because too much whiskey is drunk there, and that we must fix our attention on the individual who pays the penalty of the indulgence of his taste; and he added that if he suffered a wrong, the wrong would be doubled if the money were returned to his neighbour. The First Lord takes a similar line of consideration of the individual case.

"To this whole line of reasoning I demur. The revenue mainly comes—the efficiency, the productiveness of the tax depends upon its coming—from the masses, who generally take tea, tobacco, and liquor. The vast proportion of the consumption of liquor is that of the great majority who are not drunkards. That is the virtue of the tax as a productive tax. The wideness of the area of pressure is its strength as a fiscal device. The tax is mainly on normal, not on excessive consumption. This it is which makes it a general tax—a tax on the masses; and so an object of substantial justice would be achieved, if abatement or exemption were impossible, by remission or restitution to the masses of the community. It were truly a refinement of justice for Britain to refuse any remedy, any relief, for fear that the restoration to the Irish community of excessive taxation on individuals composing the Irish masses shall not exactly apportion the return to the individual taxpayer. Is this the reason why there is to be no redress? It would be a shabby excuse, which I hardly expected to hear urged in this place; but which I suspect is intended from one of the proposed references to the new Commission.

"But, Sir, the accusation of comparative excess which underlies this argument I dispute, and challenge the accusers. I wish there were less drinking in Ireland and in Britain. But Ireland, compared with Britain, is a sober country. You who accuse us spend far more on drink than we; and you arrange to get it cheap, at Irish and Scottish expense. You are provident in your cups. There



is here a gross inequality under a nominally equal system. It is not necessary to go to hypothetical cases, as of tea-drinking and coffee-drinking countries united for taxation. Let us take the case of the beer and the whiskey-drinking countries. Not merely is the whole sum of Irish taxation relatively excessive, but the spirit and the beer taxes are also, as between themselves, grossly unequal and partial in their operation.

"Let us look at the facts. I take Britain as a whole. Scotland has a case here against England even more aggravated than ours; and to strike the account with Britain as a whole thus lessens unduly the Irish claim as against England. But the reference is as between Great Britain and Ireland.

"In 1893 the expenditure for beer in Britain was £88,627,000, or £2, 13s. a head; in Ireland, £6,291,000, or £1, 7s. 2d. a head. Thus the Briton spends all but twice as much on beer as the Irishman. 'Oh,' you may say, 'we all know that! The Briton drinks beer, the Irishman whiskey; what about whiskey?'

"Well, Sir, what about whiskey? The expenditure for spirits in Britain was £48,571,000, or £1, 9s. per head; in Ireland, £6,144,000, or £1, 6s. 6d. per head. Thus, much more was spent per head on spirits in Britain than in Ireland. So Britain preserved her superiority in both branches of this competition; having spent twice as much on beer, she took a good deal more spirits, too; and then she says something about Irish drunkards! The Briton spends on both £4, 2s.; the Irishman, £2, 13s. 8d. And then some British statesman tells his enthusiastic constituents that the Irish

complaint is due to too much drink; and if they would only purge and live cleanly they would have no ground for grievance. I venture to suggest that it is not for Britain to "cast a stone," to preach free-will, temperance, and soberness as our cure, or to defend injustice on her part by alleging excess on ours.

"But this is not all, or nearly all. As I have said, you are provident in your cups. See how you have arranged the cost of that part which you can control—the tax. You prefer beer, and the tax on beer is alike for all. So is the tax on spirits alike for all. But the tax on sixty gallons of your favourite drink—beer—is equal to the tax on one gallon of whiskey. Having regard to the relative quantity of alcohol, the tax on beer is about one-sixth of the tax on spirits. The tax on beer is about one-sixth of the selling price in bulk; the tax on spirits about three-fourths of the selling price. What is the practical result of these equal taxes? The tax revenue, Imperial and local, was for 1893—in Britain—Spirits, £13,810,000; beer, £9,214,000—a total of £23,024,000. In Ireland—Spirits, £2,240,000; beer, £624,000—a total of £2,764,000. The Briton's drink bill was £4, 2s., out of which 16s. 1d. was tax; the Irishman's, £2, 13s. 6d., out of which 13s. 10½d. was tax. If the Irishman paid only at the Briton's rate his tax would be 10s. 6d.; his excess is 3s. 4½d., which for Ireland is no less than seven hundred and eighty thousand pounds a year. I have not run out the figures for Ireland as against England alone, but I fancy the excess would cover eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year."



TAX REVENUE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND OF IRELAND FROM 1782-3 TO 1893-4, ACCORDING TO THE TREASURY TABLES OF NET REVENUE, FROM 1782-3 TO 1800-1, INCLUSIVE; OF TOTAL REVENUE FROM 1801-2 TO 1816-7, INCLUSIVE; AND OF ESTIMATED TRUE REVENUE FROM 1819-20 TO 1893-4.

[See Tables put in *Evidence* by Sir E. W. Hamilton, Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, I. 338-9, 371-2, and II. 191.]

[Also, note :—Up to 1801 for Great Britain, and to 1821 for Ireland, the population is estimated. From 1801 (inclusive) for Great Britain, and 1821 (inclusive) for Ireland, the Census figures are taken.]

	Great Britain.			Ireland.		
	Tax Revenue.	Per head.		Tax Revenue.	Per head.	
	£	Estimated. £ s. d.		£	Estimated. £ s. d.	
1782-83 .	11,880,000	1 5 0		814,000	0 4 0	
1792-93 .	16,519,000	1 12 0		1,016,000	0 4 0	
1801-02 .	33,596,000	3 4 0		2,521,000	0 10 0	
1809-10 .	61,275,000	5 2 0		4,687,000	0 16 0	
1819-20 .	49,511,000	3 10 3		4,911,000	0 14 5	
1829-30 .	47,416,000	2 18 0		5,067,000	0 13 1	
1839-40 .	43,918,000	2 7 5		5,076,000	0 12 5	
1849-50 .	49,651,000	2 7 8		4,563,000	0 13 11	
1859-60 .	57,866,000	2 10 0		7,340,000	1 5 4	
1869-70 .	59,678,000	2 5 9		6,868,000	1 5 5	
1879-80 .	60,060,000	2 0 5		6,437,000	1 4 11	
1889-90 .	71,588,000	2 3 4		6,820,000	1 9 0	
1893-94 .	75,796,000	2 4 10		6,643,000	*1 8 10	

The amounts per head, as well as the totals of Revenue, for 1819-20, and thenceforward, to 1893-94, are extracted from Sir E. W. Hamilton's Table II. p. 191.

\* Increased in 1895-96 to £1, 15s. 1d.

Statistics such as are here given form the basis of Ireland's contention regarding over-taxation. Since 1809-10, the taxation of Great Britain has been reduced from £5, 2s. to £2, 4s. 10d. per head; that of Ireland has been increased from 16s. to £1, 15s. 1d. per head. The proportions of taxation have not been adhered to, against which even the Irish Lords recorded their protest, and by which a bare majority of the Irish Commons were induced to agree to the Union.



PRINCIPAL PAYMENTS FROM IRELAND TO ENGLAND CONSTITUTING A DRAIN ON THE ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF IRELAND, *i.e.*, PAYMENTS AND EXPENDITURE OUT OF THE ANNUAL GROSS INCOME OF IRELAND FOR WHICH THERE IS LITTLE OR NO CORRESPONDING RETURN.

[Mr. Murrough O'Brien's Table, *Evidence II. 196.*]

	Amount known approx- imately.	Probable Amount.
	£	£
1. Value of property owned by absentees, confined to rural property as per Return 167 of April 23, 1872.*	2,470,816	} 5,000,000
2. Similar proportion of Urban properties, .	960,900	
3. Residue of London Co.'s estates, . . .	30,000	
4. Mortgages of English Insurance Co.'s, as estimated by Dr. Giffen in 1886, £14,000,000 at 4½ per cent.†	630,000	1,500,000 (all absentee mortgages and annuities)-
5. Average amount paid by Church Fund as interest for 23 years to 31st March, 1894.	219,631	219,631
6. Average annual amount of capital repaid by Church Fund for 19 years.	379,769	379,769
7. Interest on Board of Works and Public Works Loan Commissioners Loans average taken as payment in 1893. (Smith-Barry's Return 376, 17th August, 1893.)‡	265,137	265,137
8. Repayment of capital by same return, . . .	430,686	430,686
9. Quit-rents and Crown Reversions, . . .	40,000	40,000
10. Land Loan Annuities 4 per cent. on £12,000,000.	480,000	480,000
11. Remittances of capital for deposit in Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks. Average annual increase of deposits for past 21 half years.	254,760	254,760
12. Interest at 1 per cent. on Post Office and Trustee Bank deposits on which 2½ per cent. is paid to depositors, while they are lent back to Ireland at not less than 3½ per cent.	65,000	65,000
13. Extra cost of Irish Private Bill legislation, estimated ( <i>see</i> Debate in 1871) to cost for witnesses five times as much as if conducted in Ireland.	Not ascertained.	...
14. Expenses of 100 M.P.'s at £300 each per session.	30,000	30,000
	£6,256,699	£8,664,983

\* This return was well known to be an under estimate; superior rents, rentcharges, and annuities were not included in it. Absenteeism has increased since 1872.

† The mortgage debt on Irish real estate has been estimated at from 80 to 120 millions by authorities. Irish mortgages were for many years a favourite investment for English lenders owing to the higher rate of interest obtainable.

‡ The benefit of most of this expenditure is represented in the assessment returns and rental.



APPROXIMATE CAPITAL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND OF IRELAND IN 1895, WITH APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE OF SURPLUS INCOME OF INHABITANTS IN BOTH COUNTRIES.

[Evidence *passim*, and Mr. Murrough O'Brien's Table, *Evidence* I. 388.]

	Great Britain.	Ireland.
	£	£
Capital in 1812, . . . . .	1,500,000,000	563,000,000
„ 1895, . . . . .	10,000,000,000	400,000,000
Gross Annual Income, 1895, . . . . .	1,500,000,000	70,000,000
Maintenance Allowance, £12 per head of population, . . . . .	420,000,000	55,000,000
	1,080,000,000	15,000,000
Revenue, 1892-93, . . . . .	Great Britain. 88,000,000	Ireland. 7,000,000
Local Taxes, . . . . .	39,000,000	3,000,000
	127,000,000	10,000,000
Surplus above bare Maintenance, . . . . .	953,000,000* about £27 per head.	5,000,000 about £1 per head.

\* More according to some Evidence.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH IN IRELAND, AS COMPARED TO IN GREAT BRITAIN, TAXES ARE RAISED OFF COMMODITIES IN GENERAL USE BY THE PEOPLE.

[From Sir Edward W. Hamilton's Tables, *Evidence* II. 192.]

Years.	Great Britain.		Ireland.	
	Indirect Taxes on Commodities, &c. Per cent.	Direct and other Taxes. Per cent.	Indirect Taxes on Commodities, &c. Per cent.	Direct and other Taxes. Per cent.
1819-1820	69·1	30·9	76·4	23·6
1829-1830	72·6	27·4	87·9	12·1
1839-1840	72·4	27·6	89·2	10·8
1849-1850	63·4	36·6	87·3	12·7
1859-1860	63·2	36·8	81·3	18·7
1869-1870	56·0	44·0	80·7	19·3
1879-1880	58·2	41·8	80·6	19·4
1889-1890	53·5	46·5	80·0	20·0
1893-1894	53·7	46·3	76·4	23·6



Here, then, is an evil of a terrible character inflicted by English rule upon Ireland. It has gone on ever since the so-called Union, now 97 years. It has been terribly aggravated by the legislation of the last 40 years. Complaints have failed to obtain redress, insults about "Irish meanness in whining for English help" have been the replies to economic arguments. The task was, and still is, "to make the bricks without straw," and when the people cry out in their distress the taunt is as of old—"ye are lazy." But the reader who desires to know how these things came about must read the history of the crime and blunder called the Union—the magnificent struggles of Daniel O'Connell by constitutional action to win back the National Parliament, the gallant resolves of the "Young Ireland Party" by the sword to win what the sword had taken away, the horrible scenes of "Black '45," and what John Mitchel powerfully calls "The Last Conquest" (perhaps)!—the reader will be in a position then to easily grasp the causes and real meaning of that last attempt of the unconquered Irish race called "the Fenian Movement." Reason having failed once again, the appeal to the God of battles was resolved upon. As a military movement, its results were little better than a fiasco, but out of it sprung the intelligent, well-directed movement called Home Rule, of which the world has heard much, and will hear more. The reader will find in the history of both the Fenian and the Home Rule movements well established refutations of the ignorant or malevolent misrepresentations by the British and West British Press of these movements. He will find more justification for the Fenian attempt than for that of the American rebels in 1776, or for that of the 1000 Red Shirts of Marsala, who marched with the approval of England against King "Bomba" of Naples. Neither the American Colonies nor the subjects of Naples were subjected to such wrongs as the Irish people, but Washington won, and he is honoured even by England. Had he lost he would have been hanged by the grandfathers of those who now take off their hats at his tomb. Garibaldi drove out the despot Bomba from Naples, and England gave him a triumph in her capital.

Rebellion, foul dishonouring word,  
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained  
The holiest cause that tongue or sword  
Of mortal ever lost or gained.

How many a spirit born to bliss,  
Has sunk beneath that withering name,  
That but a day, an hour's success,  
Had wafted to eternal fame.

The British reader who has carefully accompanied us so far, and who may be tempted to read in "Ireland since '98," by John Mitchel, the continuation of the tale of wrong, may be inclined to feel that the wrongs have been so foul, feelings of hatred have become so deep, that the irreconcilable political philosophy of Mr. Mitchel is the creed of Irish nationality. It must be kept in mind that our author wrote his history of Ireland during his 25 years' exile. During nearly all that time Ireland lay, as Sir Charles Gavan Duffy described her truly, "like a skeleton on the dissecting table." Constitutional effort had failed in the '50s and '60s as hopelessly in its different attempts as during 150 years before. John Bright, Benjamin D'Israeli, and W. E. Gladstone, all had told their countrymen that concessions had never been made to Ireland from sense of justice, nor under circumstances that entitled the Government to gratitude. Mitchel wrote with the strong conviction that as in the past so in the future, England would only yield measures of justice to Ireland when it became dangerous or inconvenient to refuse. His object was to strengthen the National Faith of 20 million of Irishmen, and to enlighten the civilised nations as to the existence of this "Poland of the West." Mitchel scarcely believed in the possibility of justice existing in any country in the power of "the modern Carthaginian robber." He lived to return from exile—to see the "dead carcass" full of life—to hear the old unconquered nation demanding the restoration of her legislature, and calling her sons from the ends of the world to aid her in a new campaign. From the ashes of the Fenian movement—

Vernal-like from death and mourning,  
Sprang our confined Fatherland—  
Phoenix-like from out the burning,  
Sepulchre and spies o'erturning.  
Courage, brothers—hand to hand—  
God's with Ireland, hand to hand.

And the men of "Gallant Tipperary" returned him to Parliament as their protest against *the packed jury*, by which, 25 years before, he had been found guilty. But the British Parliament insulted the constituency and the patriot that a wiser assembly would have treated with marked respect by refusing him the right to take his seat.



He lived to see all the world except England in sympathy with the new Irish movement; but he did not live to see the great mind and the noble heart of Britain's peerless statesman captured by the justice and the high moral worth of the Irish cause. It is possible that, like many a Fenian leader in and out of Parliament to-day, he would have felt as persecution and insult ceased, and as a generous rally was made by the British people behind the "Grand Old Man" to wipe out a bad past and create the possibilities of a glorious future, that no room remained in the Irish heart for hatred or ungenerous suspicion; but, whether or no, we have now reached a stage of the social evolution when the individual, the family, the tribe or clan, the nation or empire, each marking a distinct stage and each entitled to certain inalienable rights, must all recognise that they are but the organs of a greater social organism in which the sublime ethical truth which the Christian religion has taught in every age will obtain more and more, "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity." This ethical principle is growing despite British mammon worship and its gospel of greed on one side, and the just claims of Irish National Patriotism, unduly stimulated by wrongs and insults, on the other. Ireland can perform a useful function in the Imperial system, and is willing to perform it. The terms of the demand are simple, honourable, and mutually beneficial; it depends upon England when the compact, which will accomplish a new social advance, shall take place. Just now, no one has appeared to wear the mantle of Gladstone, and a

reaction is appearing against Ireland's demand. We may have again a time of strife, and even hatred, between England and Ireland. We are in the position described by the prophet Ezekiel—"Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge." To make matters worse, the British people are in the position so powerfully denounced by the prophet Jeremiah—"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land." "The Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" The Press is to-day to England what the prophet was to the Jew, and the merchant has the rule that the Priest had in Jeremiah's time. If contemptuous hate and lofty scorn are to be the guiding principles of British action towards the Irish National demand, then wise men will indeed ask in amazement, "What will ye do in the end thereof?" But there is yet a portion of the Press in England which has not given itself up to self-idolatry and jingoism, and many merchants who love justice and hate iniquity, and, above all, we have slowly but surely emerging into political power the industrial classes with large human sympathies and small respect for so-called "veiled rights" that do not accord with abstract justice; by these let us hope we shall win that National independence, in combination with that Imperial Unity which will give peace and goodwill to the British and Irish people, and a strength to the integrity of the Empire greater than it has ever had before.

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*N.B.—This Work embraces the last seventy years of "THE HISTORY OF IRELAND," by Mr. Mitchel; and is unquestionably the best account published of the interesting and important period of which it treats.*

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GLASGOW: CAMERON & FERGUSON.



# IRELAND SINCE '98.

1803—1804.

Reason to believe that Government was all the time aware of the Conspiracy—"Striking Terror"—Martial Law—Catholic Address—Arrests—Informers—Vigorous Measures—In Cork—In Belfast—Hundreds of Men Imprisoned without Charge—Brutal Treatment of Prisoners—Special Commission—Eighteen Persons Hung—Debate in Parliament—Irish Exiles in France—First Consul Plans a New Expedition to Ireland—Formation of the "Irish Legion"—Irish Legion in Bretagne—Official Reply of the First Consul to T. A. Emmet—Designs of the French Government—Buonaparte's Mistake—French Fleet again ordered Elsewhere—The Legion goes to the Rhine, and to Walcheren—End of the Addington Ministry—Mr. Pitt returns to Office—Condition of Ireland—Decay of Dublin—Decline of Trade—Increase of Debt—Ruinous Effects of the Union—Presbyterian Clergy Pensioned, and the Reason.

A LARGE number of the bravest and purest men whom Ireland ever produced having now, within three or four years, been either hung or banished, it was hoped that the Protestant Ascendancy and British connection, the tithes, the Oligarchical Government, the packed juries—in short, our Constitution in Church and State—were at last secure against "Jacobins," and all manner of French principles.

Although the government of Lord Hardwicke had *seemed* to shut its eyes and see nothing of the preparations for Emmet's insurrection, there is reason to believe that most of its details were well known at the Castle.

In the collection of papers of Major Sirr, in the volume for 1803, and a succeeding volume containing miscellaneous letters, of dates from 1798 to 1803, are found various letters of spies and informers, of the old battalion of testimony of 1798, giving information to the Major of treasonable proceedings, meetings, preparing pikes, &c., being in existence in the three months preceding the outbreak of the insurrection of July 23, 1803. In the latter volume are many similar letters from a Roman Catholic gentleman in Monastereven, suggesting arrests to the Major, and, amongst others, the arrest of a gentleman of some standing in society, a Brigadier-Major Fitzgerald.

It is also plain that Government knew of Emmet's having come from France to Dublin, and knew his errand, and at least some of his movements; for in October, 1802, Robert Emmet dined at Mr John Keogh's, of Mount Jerome, shortly after

his arrival in Dublin, in the company of John Philpot Curren. The conversation turned on the political state of the country—on the disposition of the people with respect to a renewal of the struggle. Robert Emmet spoke with great vehemence and energy in favour of the probability of success, in the event of another effort being made. John Keogh asked, in case it were, how many counties did he think would rise? The question was one of facts and figures. Robert Emmet replied that nineteen counties could be relied on. This dinner party was immediately known to Government; and, next day, a well-known magistrate, with two attendants, waited on Mr. Keogh, demanded and carried off his papers.\*

Mr. Plowden does not hesitate to speak of the Government on this occasion as having "made the full experiment of their favourite tactic of *not urging the rebels to postpone their attempts by any appearance of too much precaution and preparation of inviting rebellion*, in order to ascertain its extent, and of forcing premature explosion for the purpose of *radical cure*."

After the danger was past, however, and after it was known how very wretched and impotent the whole attempt had turned out, superabundant precautions were taken, with the usual objects of "creating alarm" and striking terror. A Privy Council sat for several hours, and a proclamation was prepared and issued immediately, ordering the army to disperse all assemblies of armed rebels, and to do

\* Madden. *Memoir of Emmet*. Third Series.



military execution upon all such found in arms. Barriers were erected in Dublin, and strong detachments stationed with cannon upon the bridges, and in the most frequented avenues and passes in the city.

On the 28th of July, the King sent a message to both Houses of Parliament, asking for additional powers in Ireland—that is, a renewed suspension of the writ of *Habeas Corpus*. The Act was passed at once. In Ireland, the judges went circuit that summer with strong escorts of troops.

We now again find the Catholics of rank and title coming forward to profess their loyalty; and, indeed, the brutal murder of the excellent Kilwarden, and others, on that ill-omened night, appeared but too well to justify good citizens in treating the whole movement as a mere riot for pillage and assassination. On the 4th of August, an address, signed by the most respectable Roman Catholics in and about Dublin, was presented to the Lord-Lieutenant, by a deputation consisting of the Earl of Fingal and Lord Viscount Gormanstown, and the Catholic Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin. It expressed their utmost horror and detestation of the late atrocious proceedings, their attachment to the King, and admiration of the Constitution. It contained a special declaration, that, however ardent their wish might be to participate in the full enjoyment of its benefits, they never should be brought to seek for such participation through any other medium than that of the free, unbiassed determination of the Legislature.

In Lord Hardwicke's reply he made not the slightest allusion to the wish those gentlemen had expressed, that they might be admitted within the pale of that Constitution they so much admired.

A system of suspicious repression was now once more enforced. Even before the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, many persons, who had been obnoxious to Government, or to the agents or favourites of the Castle, were apprehended, without any charge or ostensible cause of detention.\* And, as it usually happens, when strong measures are resorted to by a weak government, the subalterns, who advised against reason, executed these measures without discretion. On this occasion, most of those who, upon the Secretary's warrants, were thrown into jail under colour of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, were treated with

\* Some of these were William Todd Jones, at Cork, who was arrested on the 29th of July, and after him Messrs. Drennan, Donovan, and others; Mr. Ross M'Cann, Bernard Coile, Mr. James Tandy, and others, at Dublin.

a rigorous inhumanity which the law neither intended nor warranted. The system of espionage was extended, and the wages of information raised.

Not only rewards of £1,000 were offered for the information of any of the murderers of Lord Kilwarden, or his nephew, Mr. Wolfe, and for the apprehension of Mr. Russell, but a reward of £50 for each of the first one hundred rebels who might be discovered, that were of the number who appeared under arms in Thomas Street, on Saturday night, the 23d of July.

The whole of the yeomanry of Ireland was put upon permanent duty, at the enormous expense of £100,000 per month. In Cork, too, precautionary measures were adopted—viz., that no one should quit the country without a passport, and that every householder should affix a list of the family and inmates on their doors, by order of General Myers, who commanded in that district. The Sovereign of Belfast issued an order for the inhabitants to remain within their houses after eight o'clock in the evening, and for several other regulations of strict observance. In Dublin, the magistrates convened a meeting, at the suggestion of Government, at which they determined that the city should be divided into forty-eight sections, each section to be divided by a *chevaux de frise*, to prevent a surprise from the pikemen, which would not at the same time prevent the fire of the musketry of the troops and yeomanry.

From the moment of the passage of martial law, the arrests became much more numerous; and any one pointed out as *suspicious*, generally by a personal enemy, was at once thrown into a dungeon. The horrors of these Irish dungeons came out, years afterwards, on an inquiry before Parliament. Mr. Plowden cautiously and timidly alludes to them in this manner:—\*

“Sensible that general charge and invective come not within the province of the historian, the author felt it his duty to inform the reader that at this time commenced a new system of gradual inquisitorial torture in prison. Suffice it here to observe that there are many surviving victims of these inhuman and unwarrantable confinements who, without having been charged with any crime or tried for any offence, have from this period undergone years of confinement and incredible afflictions and sufferings, under the full conviction that they were inflicted from motives of personal resentment, and for the purpose of depriving them of life.”

\* Plowden. *History of Ireland since the Union*.



In fact, although only eighty men had turned out with Robert Emmet, and very few of these were ever found, the jails were, in the autumn of this year, crowded with many hundreds of persons, and all the horrors of the Prevot prison were repeated upon their unfortunate victims. This was the more unaccountable as Emmet never allowed any of his followers to be *sworn in*; there was no pretext, as in '98, for charging suspected persons with having taken "unlawful oaths," nor for torturing men in order to wring out information of such an offence having been committed. The system of Government, then, has no assignable motive save one—to strike terror and wreak vengeance. Every house in the city and neighbourhood of Dublin was searched for arms, and the names of the inmates of each house were once more required to be posted on the outer door.

Thus the entire system of Irish coercion, to which our country is so well accustomed, was in full operation within a few days after Emmet's attempt.

On the 11th of August, the day before Parliament was prorogued, Mr. Hutchinson made one effort to draw attention to these atrocities. He moved an address to the King praying to have papers laid before the House preparatory to an inquiry into the state of Ireland. The motion was opposed by Ministers on the ground that it was more than useless to demand information from Government upon the state of Ireland without having proposed any specific measure to be based upon such information when received, and that on the very eve of a prorogation. They roundly asserted that the Irish Government had not been surprised on the 23d of July, and that the *prevention* of what did happen would have taught wisdom and given strength to the rebel cause. The motion was negatived without a division.

At the "special commission" which tried Emmet, twenty persons were tried for their lives. Of these one was acquitted and one respited; the rest were hung.

Parliament met again on the 22d of November. Charles James Fox originated a short debate on the state of Ireland. He charged the Government with want of candour in endeavouring to convey an idea that it was the intention of the rebels in Ireland to put that country into the hands of France, when such a design had been so strongly disavowed by their leaders. "It was not," he added, "to be hoped or expected that as long as grievances existed Ireland could become loyal, and he sincerely hoped that the

House would not, by confiding in words, leave her exposed to a repetition of those scenes that had lately occurred."

Mr. Addington insisted that some leaders of the United Irishmen "were really disposed to subserve the purposes of France. From the close intercourse now carried on between the two countries, he concluded that the people of Ireland would be led to compare the different principles of the two governments, by which they would learn to appreciate *the blessings of their own Constitution*, and to foresee the miseries which *any change* would bring upon them." Further, Mr. Addington and Mr. Yorke vehemently urged the House to give them credit in assuring them that though the leaders of the late insurrection were not immediately connected with the French Government, they were yet connected with Irish traitors abroad, who held immediate intercourse with that Government.

This last statement was true at any rate—omitting the word "traitors." Thomas Addis Emmet, Doctor MacNeven, and Arthur O'Connor, were then in close communication with the French Government, and eagerly awaiting the determinations of Buonaparte with regard to a descent upon Ireland. Miles Byrne had safely arrived at Paris and communicated with Thomas Addis Emmet; but, almost immediately, news came of Robert's capture, of the certainty of his execution, and of the total prostration of Ireland under the iron heel of military power. There was then in France a large number of Irish exiles, and Mr. Emmet informed the First Consul that they were ready to go as volunteers in any expedition which had for its object the emancipation of their country. It was in the month of November, 1803, that the decree was issued for the formation of the *Irish Legion*.

Miles Byrne, who was himself afterwards a distinguished officer of the Legion, gives this account of its origin:—"The First Consul eagerly entered into all the details related in the report on the state of Ireland, given to him by Mr. Thomas Addis Emmet, on the arrival at Paris of the confidential agent sent from Dublin in August, 1803; and, in consequence, it was stipulated that a French army should be sent to assist the Irish to get rid of the English yoke; the First Consul, understanding from Mr. Emmet that Augereau was a favourite with the Irish nation, had him appointed General-in-Chief to command the expedition, and immediately ordered the formation of an Irish Legion in the service of France. He gave to all



those who volunteered to enter the Irish Legion commission as French officers, so that, in the event of their falling into the hands of the English, they should be protected; or, should any violence be offered them, he should have the right to retaliate on the English prisoners in France.

"The decree of the First Consul for the formation of this Irish Legion was dated November, 1803; by it the officers were all to be Irishmen, or Irishmen's sons born in France. The pay was to be the same as that given to officers and soldiers of the line of the French army. No rank was to be given higher than captain till they should land with the expedition in Ireland.

"It was, however, stipulated that on leaving Brest a certain number of captains were to get the rank of colonel, and also a certain number of lieutenants that of lieutenant-colonel; which rank was to be confirmed to them even in the event of the expedition failing, and their getting back to France. In naming these captains and lieutenants, the preference was to be given to those who had been obliged to expatriate themselves for their exertions in Ireland to effect its independence."

Adjutant-General MacSheehy, an Irishman by birth, but in the French service, was charged with the organization of the Legion; and for that purpose was commanded to repair to Morlaix, where the Irish exiles were assembled.

Adjutant-General MacSheehy received unlimited powers at Morlaix to propose officers for advancement up to the rank of captain; all he named were confirmed by the Minister of War, General Berthier.

The greatest exertions were made to have the officers splendidly equipped and ready for sailing. They received the same outfit given to French officers entering on campaign, no expense being spared by the French Government.

Three months later, General Augereau was at Brest, having attached to his staff Arthur O'Connor, then made a General of Division in the service of France.

Morlaix is a seaport town in Bretagne, not far from Brest, but more to the north, and looking straight over towards Cork and Waterford harbours. It was here that a large number of gallant and generous young Irishmen, many of them of good position in society and great accomplishments, were flocking together in those days, full of spirit and hardihood, and eagerly gazing over the blue water, as if they could already see the crests of the Cumberagh mountains. Amongst

these men we find many names of officers who afterwards distinguished themselves in Germany, in Holland, and in Spain. O'Reilly, Allen, Corbet, Burgess, O'Morin, O'Mara, Ware, Barker, Fitzhenry, Master-son, St. Leger, Murray, and MacMahon. "We were happy and united," says Miles Byrne.

"The Legion assembled at Morlaix was marched to Quimper in March, 1804, where all those officers who had been proposed for advancement by Adjutant-General MacSheehy received their brevets. From Quimper the Legion was ordered to Carhaix, in Finistère, a small town (the native place of Latour d'Auvergne, premier grenadier de France), which, from being more inland and less frequented, was better suited for manœuvring, and where the best results were obtained. Two officers, Captain Tennant and Captain William Corbet, were deputed from thence by the Legion to go to Paris, to be present at the coronation of the Emperor (May, 1804), who on that occasion presented it, as well as the French regiments, with colours and an eagle. On one side of the colours was written, 'Napoléon I., Empereur des Français, à la Légion Irlandaise;' on the reverse was a harp (without a crown) with the inscription: 'L'indépendance d'Irlande.'

The Irish Legion was the only foreign corps in the French service to which Napoleon ever intrusted an eagle.

Rejoicings took place at Carhaix, as in the other towns of France, in honour of the coronation, by order of the authorities.

It was while the legion was yet at Morlaix, that Thomas Addis Emmet, who had remained in Paris, obtained from the First Consul what seemed a definitive and positive assurance, both as to the certainty of the expedition parting for Ireland, and as to the fair terms to be observed with that country in leaving to it its cherished independence. In this document Buonaparte (not yet Emperor) assures the Irish Envoy that his intention is to assure the independence of Ireland, and to give sufficient protection to such as may join the French army; that in case of being joined by a considerable corps of Irish, he will never make a peace with England without stipulating for Ireland's independence; that Ireland shall be treated in all respects as America was in the last war; that every one embarking with the French army shall be considered a French soldier; and if any of these be arrested and not treated as a prisoner of war, retaliation shall follow; that every corps of United Irishmen shall be considered a part of the French army; and



that in case of the expedition being unsuccessful, France will keep on foot a number of Irish Brigades on the same footing as French troops. The First Consul suggests the formation of a committee to frame proclamations and to prepare narratives of English oppressions in Ireland, to be published in the *Moniteur*.<sup>\*</sup> This official paper not only proves what excellent foundation then existed for the sanguine hope of the exiles that something effectual was at last to be done for Ireland, but proves also how carefully those exiles stipulated always that the interposition of a French army should be only on the footing of auxiliaries, like that of Rochambeau in America. It is a sufficient answer to those constant accusations made in England, that Irish revolutionists sought to throw their country under the dominion of France. And it must be said, once for all, in the negotiations and

<sup>\*</sup> Here is the original, which was instantly communicated by Emmet to MacNeven, then at Morlaix:—

"COPY OF THE FIRST CONSUL'S ANSWER TO MY MEMOIRE OF 13TH NIVOSE, DELIVERED TO ME 27TH NIVOSE:—

"Le Premier Consul a lu avec la plus grande attention, la memoire qui lui a été adressée par M. Emmet le 13 Nivose.

"Il desire que les Irlandais Unis soyent bien convaincus que son intention est d'assurer l'indépendance de l'Irlande, et de donner protection entière et efficace à tous ceux d'entre eux, qui prendront part à l'expédition, ou qui se joindront aux armées Françaises.

"Le Gouvernement Français ne peut faire aucune proclamation avant d'avoir touché le territoire Irlandais. Mais le général qui commandera l'expédition sera muni de lettres scellées, par lesquelles le Premier Consul déclarera qu'il ne fera point la paix avec l'Angleterre, sans stipuler pour l'indépendance de l'Irlande, dans le cas, cependant, où l'armée aurait été jointe par un corps considerable d'Irlandais Unis.

"L'Irlande sera en tout traitée, comme l'a été l'Amérique, dans la guerre passée.

"Tout individu qui s'embarquera avec l'armée Française destinée pour l'expédition, sera commissioné comme Français: s'il était arrêté, et qu'il ne fut pas traité comme prisonnier de guerre la représaille s'exercera sur les prisonniers Anglais.

"Tout corps formé au nom des Irlandais Unis sera considéré comme faisant partie de l'armée Française. Enfin, si l'expédition ne réussissait pas et que les Irlandais fussent obligés de revenir en France, la France entretiendra un certain nombre de Brigades Irlandaises, et fera des pensions, à tout individu qui aurait fait partie du gouvernement ou des autorités du pays.

"Les pensions pourraient être assimilées à celles qui sont accordées en France aux titulaires de grade ou d'emploi correspondant, qui ne sont pas en activité.

"Le Premier Consul desire qu'il se forme un comité d'Irlandais Unis. Il ne voit pas d'inconvénient, à ce que les membres de ce comité fassent des proclamations, et instruisent leurs compatriotes de l'état de choses.

"Ces proclamations seront insérées dans *L'Argus* et dans les differens journaux de l'Europe, à fin d'éclairer les Irlandais, sur la parti qu'ils ont à suivre, et sur les espérances qu'ils doivent concevoir. Si la comité veut faire une relation des actes de tyrannie exercées contre l'Irlande par la Gouvernement Anglais, on l'insérera dans *Le Moniteur*."

projects for French aid, whether with Tone, Lewis, or Emmet, there was no reason to doubt that the single object of the successive French Governments was to aid Ireland, in good faith, to win a real independence—not, perhaps, so much from a love and sympathy for Ireland, as from a desire to weaken England, whose intrigues and subsidies were stirring up the whole continent to effect the ruin of France.

Yet, after all, those enthusiastic Irishmen of the Legion were not destined to see Ireland. Other urgent necessities arose; and most of the fleet at Brest was withdrawn for different destinations. It was the greatest mistake that Buonaparte ever made, and the noblest opportunity lost. The Legion was ordered to the Rhine, and from thence to Holland, where they had at least the satisfaction of meeting their enemies at Walcheren, and aiding in the destruction of that imposing armament of England. Thomas Addis Emmet, despairing of effecting anything through French agency, emigrated at last to America, where he took the first rank at the bar of New York, and lived long honoured and beloved.

Meanwhile, the imbecile administration of Mr. Addington came to an end. Mr. Pitt had put him into office to serve a temporary purpose, and was now ready to resume the reins himself. It has already been stated, by anticipation, that on returning to power this treacherous Minister made no condition in favour of Catholic relief, which is in itself a sufficient proof that his former resignation, ostensibly on that question, had been made on a false pretext. In the new Administration (gazetted May 14, 1804), he was Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury. The Secretary of War was Lord Camden—a name associated in Ireland with torture and "free quarters." The President of the Board of Control was Lord Castlereagh. No Government more hostile to Ireland ever ruled in the three Kingdoms. The King's mental malady had grown more alarming about the time of Mr. Pitt's return; and his advisers could by no means think of troubling the conscience of the invalid by any suggestion tending to emancipation of Catholics and "breach of his coronation oath."

Ireland had now had more than three years' experience of Legislative Union; and already began to experience the wasting and draining effects of that odious and fatal transaction. Trade was declining, debt and taxes increasing; but the debt much faster than the produce of the



taxes. The absenteeism of proprietors, as had been expected, and indeed intended, occasioned year by year a greater and greater depletion of wealth. The fine country-seats of wealthy proprietors were generally deserted, and their estates were managed by agents. Dublin, which in the eighteen years of independence (even such partial independence as it was) had grown to the rank of a fine metropolitan city, had been adorned by many sumptuous palaces of a resident nobility, and enriched by the expenditure of a luxurious society, was now sunk into a provincial town. The centre of political interest, of intellectual activity, and of fashionable life, had been transferred to London. The fine mansions of Irish Peers and wealthy Commoners, after lying long vacant, were gradually turned to other uses.\* It is true that Ireland might well afford to do without those great Peers and feudal proprietors, as France has done; but the difference is, that in Ireland's case they still draw away in rent the produce of the land: they are sponges, which are filled in Ireland to be squeezed in England: they are clouds, formed by sucking up all the juices of our island, and which then float off, "to rain down in London or dissipate at Cheltenham." Thus it was found, very soon after union, that the exports of Ireland greatly increased; but they were exports of corn, cattle, and raw material for manufactures, to pay the absentee rent; while our imports were chiefly of manufactured articles and colonial produce from England—England thus deriving the profit both from our exports and from our imports. Then there was the enormous cost of the war in Europe, to put down French principles, to which expense Ireland was made to contribute in a much greater ratio than England. Mr. Foster, in a speech in Parliament on the Irish budget, immediately after Pitt's return to office, said he lamented to find the predictions, which he had ventured to urge on the probable state of Ireland, during the discussions upon the Union, but too forcibly verified by the then deplorable state of her finances, as compared with her public debt and expenditure. Within the last ten years, the public debt of Ireland had made an alarming progress. It stood in 1793 at £2,400,000, in 1800, at £25,400,000.

\* The Duke of Leinster's palace accommodates a Museum of Natural History; Powerscourt House is a warehouse of linen-drapers. The mansion of the Earls of Tyrone is a school-house; Belvedere House is a convent; Aldborough House is a barrack, &c.

On January 5, 1804, at £43,000,000, and in that year there had been added to it no less a sum than £9,500,000. This formed a quota far exceeding the *ratio* established by the Union compact to be paid by Ireland. This ruinous race, in which Ireland was so far exceeding her means by her expenditure, would shortly equalize her debt in proportion to that of England, and entitle England to call for a Parliamentary decision, and consolidation of accounts and equalization of taxes. He then stated to the House the corresponding produce of the Irish revenue. In the year 1800, which immediately preceded the Union, the net produce of the revenue was £2,800,000, when she owed £25,000,000: in the last year it was only £2,789,000, whilst the debt amounted to £53,000,000. There was every reason to believe, that for the running year the produce of the Irish revenue would not yield one shilling towards Ireland's quota in the common expenditure of the empire. Such was the situation of Ireland in the summer of 1804, as depicted by Mr. Foster, with an enormous and growing increase of debt, a rapid falling off of revenue, and a decay in commerce and manufactures.

It may, of course, be alleged, that as the Act of Union places, or purports to place, the two countries on a footing of perfect equality and reciprocity, in respect to trade and commerce, there has been nothing to prevent Ireland, if its inhabitants had energy and enterprise like Englishmen, to manufacture for themselves, and so keep at home a great portion of the wealth which is annually drained from them. The fallacy of this suggestion is now well understood. It is true, the laws regulating trade are the same in the two islands; Ireland *may* export even woollen cloth to England; she *may* import, in her own ships, tea from China, and sugar from Barbadoes; the laws which made those acts penal offences no longer exist, they are no longer needed; England is fully in possession; and by the operation of those old laws Ireland was utterly ruined. England has the commercial marine—Ireland has it to create. England has the manufacturing machinery and skill, of which Ireland was deprived, by express laws for that purpose. England has the current of trade established, setting strongly in her own channel, while Ireland is left dry. To create or recover at this day these great industrial and commercial resources, and that in the face of wealthy rivals already in full possession, is manifestly impossible, without one or other of these two conditions—



either immense command of capital or effectual protective duties. But by the Union our capital is drained away to England; and by the Union we are deprived of the power of imposing protective duties. It was to this very end that the Union was forced upon Ireland, through "intolerance of Irish prosperity." "Do not unite with us, sir," said Samuel Johnson, "*we shall rob you.*"

It was in the year 1803 that the British Government bethought itself of making the Presbyterians of Ulster more "loyal," and weaning them the better from "French principles," by largely increasing the scanty means of the Dissenting clergy. The Ministers had been previously aided, in a very grudging and shabby manner, by a sort of bribe, the *Regium Donum*, or royal gift, first granted in 1672 by Charles II., who gave £600 of "Secret Service money" to be distributed in equal portions among them annually. The grant was discontinued towards the close of his reign and during that of James II., but was renewed by William III., who augmented it to £1,200 a-year. In 1784, the amount was increased to £2,200; in 1792, to £5,000. Still, this was a most paltry pittance for so large a body of clergymen, and rather degraded than enriched those who received it; while the Anglican Church, with a smaller proportion of the population, was so munificently endowed with lands and tithes.

The Government took alarm on finding that the Presbyterians of Ulster, both clergy and laity, had been generally Republicans and United Irishmen in 1798. Overtures were soon after made to them through their most influential pastors,—especially Doctor Black of Londonderry,—giving them a prospect of great increase to their grant if they would not oppose the Union. This Doctor Black had been a delegate to the Dungannon Convention, in 1772, and had appeared amongst the other delegates in his uniform as a volunteer officer.

These overtures had the desired success; and therefore, in 1803, the *Regium Donum* was quintupled. The total yearly grant to Nonconforming Ministers in Ireland amounted, in 1852, to £38,561. (*Thom's Official Directory.*)

Doctor Black had a good place; he was agent and distributor of this disgraceful *Donum*; and some years afterwards he very naturally (like Castlereagh) committed suicide, by throwing himself off the bridge of Derry into the River Foyle.

## CHAPTER XL.

1804—1805.

Mr. Pitt in Office—Royal Speech—No Mention of Ireland—Alarm about Invasion—Martello Towers—Reliance of the Irish Catholics on Mr. Pitt—Treatment of the Prisoners—Mr. James Tandy—Mr. Pitt raises a Storm against the Catholics—Catholic Meeting in Dublin—*Habeas Corpus* Act again Suspended—Ireland "Loyal"—Duplicity of Lord Hardwicke—Catholic Deputies go to Mr. Pitt—A "Sincere Friend"—Mr. Pitt refuses to present Catholic Petition—Declares he will resist Emancipation—Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox present it—Debate in the Lords—In the Commons—Speeches of Fox, Doctor Duigenan, Grattan, Perceval, Pitt, Sir John Newport—Emancipation refused, both by Lords and Commons—Great Majorities.

WHEN Mr. Pitt returned to office in 1804, he did not find himself so omnipotent in the country as he had been during his former administration, or even during that of his *locum tenens*. Although Mr. Addington had affected not to control the late elections by any treasury influence, he now exerted his personal influence upon all the members who owed their seats to his patronage or favour, to join him in opposing Mr. Pitt. Though he could brook the injury of being displaced, in order to re-admit Mr. Pitt to power, he could neither forgive nor forget the insult of being expelled for incapacity and weakness. Mr. Pitt expected to regain more of his lost power by negotiation during the recess than by his oratory in the Senate; but was reluctantly constrained to prolong the session to the 31st of July. Under the combination of great external and internal difficulties, it became an object of peculiar anxiety with the Minister to give the nation some open and unequivocal proof of the complete recovery of His Majesty's health. When the King went to prorogue the Parliament, the House of Peers was attended by an unusual crowd, and particularly by the few foreign Ministers then resident in London. In no part of the speech was there even an indirect reference to Ireland.

Ireland, indeed, was completely removed into the background by the Union; and while the Government felt it had her safe under the coercion of a great army, and the exhaustion and terrorism which now formed the single British policy for that island, Ministers evidently thought the less said about Ireland the better.

The apparent alarm about invasion was carefully kept up during the whole summer. The Government prints sedulously warned the public against the machina-



tions of the French party, which then prevailed throughout the country. Upon this assumption they inveighed against French tyranny and injustice, and decried the loyalty of the native Irish. Thus they justified the expense of their public measures of defence, and affected to sanction the necessity of internal coercion. The encampment of fifteen thousand men, near the Curragh of Kildare, consisted of regular militia, artillery, British horse artillery, and a vast commissariat and drivers' corps. Everything bore the appearance of active service. The Martello Towers, and other defensive works on the coast, were forwarded with unusual energy. Many additional persons were taken into custody under the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, and the rigorous treatment of the state prisoners, who had been for several months in confinement, was sharpened, without any visible or known cause.\*

The Catholics, whom Pitt had insidiously deluded by prospects of emancipation, were now so simple as to anticipate, on his return to place, some efficient steps for carrying that object, for which he professed to have abandoned his official situation. They now publicly rejoiced "*in the benefit of having so many characters of eminence pledged not to embark in the service of Government, except on the terms of Catholic privileges being obtained.*" Frequent Catholic meetings were holden in Dublin, in which the general sense of the body to petition Parliament for their

\* Mr. James Tandy, and thirteen other of the principal state prisoners of the first class, as they were styled at the Castle, petitioned the Lord-Lieutenant, July 11, 1804; and after having specified many of the acts of barbarous cruelty inflicted upon them, as sworn to in the King's Bench, they conclude in these words: In short, we experience a treatment rather calculated for untamed beasts than men. They assured his Excellency that, to the pressing and repeated remonstrances which they had presented to Doctor Trevor (the inspector of the prisons) against the harshness of their treatment, they had received a formal answer,—that it had not only the sanction, but its origin in the express directions of Lord Hardwicke's Government. The first petition not having been attended to, was followed by a second on August 12th, which again complained that Doctor Trevor executed his office in a manner at once mean and malicious, and pleaded orders from Government for their rigorous treatment. They complained that they were so reduced by their sufferings (not merited by them, nor necessary for safe custody), that their lives were become of no value, and literally a burden to them; and that there was not one of the petitioners, who from many concurring circumstances could not on oath declare a firm belief of an intention to deprive them of life by underhand means.

These appeals received not the smallest attention; and great numbers of the prisoners, without a charge against them, were kept in various prisons for years. Mr. J. Tandy, indeed, was liberated before the end of the year; having first promised not to flog Mr. Secretary Marsden, as he says he had threatened to do.

total emancipation was unanimously resolved. Mr. Pitt dreaded nothing so much as to have the sincerity of his pledges brought under discussion. As Lord Fingal, from his rank in life, and more from the amiable qualities of his mind, was known to possess the confidence of many of his Catholic countrymen, Sir Evan Nepean was directed to attempt through his lordship every means to hold back the petition. He was invited to dinner, frequently closeted at the Castle, and more sedulously courted than on any former occasion. However his lordship may have been personally disposed to hold back, few or none of the body could be induced to postpone their petition.

In proportion to the failure of the Minister's Continental plans, did the Catholic body of Ireland feel their own weight in the Imperial scale. The aggrandizement of Napoleon had been the unvarying result of Mr. Pitt's vehement exertions to crush him. He was quietly and solemnly crowned Emperor of the French at Paris by Pope Pius VII.; a circumstance which Mr. Pitt, with his usual craft, attempted to convert into an engine of obloquy on the Catholic body, and an opportune and plausible objection to their petition, which in spite of his secret manœuvres, through Sir Evan Nepean, he now foresaw would be brought forward. The Government papers industriously published and severely commented upon a memorial, said to have been written by MacNeven at Paris, addressed to the Irish officers of the several Continental powers, particularly to those in the Austrian service, encouraging them to join in the then intended attempts to liberate Ireland from the thralldom of England; and promising to give them timely notice of the sailing of the expedition.

These Ministerial journals vied also with one another in republishing and commenting on the Papal allocution, addressed by His Holiness to a secret consistory at Rome, on October 28, 1804, immediately before his departure for Paris to perform the ceremony of the Imperial coronation. It referred to the gratitude due to Napoleon for having re-established the Catholic religion in France by the *concordat*; since which he had put forth all his authority to cause it to be freely professed and publicly exercised throughout that renowned nation, and had again recently shown himself most anxious for the prosperity of that religion. It also contained confident assurance that a personal interview with the Emperor would be for the good of the Catholic Church, which is *the only ark of salvation*.



Here was a dreadful thing! they exclaimed; as if all the world had not known before that Catholics believed their Church to be the only ark of salvation. Editors, preachers, and pamphleteers shrieked out, in all the tones of alarm and horror, that this meant burning heretics. Here was extreme danger, they insisted, to a "Protestant State," in this ominous reconciliation of the Emperor with the Church; as it would give him greater influence in Ireland, when he should land there to overthrow Church and State, throne and altar. These topics were enlarged on with so much apparent sincerity of terror, that an enlightened public really began to fancy the dungeons of the Inquisition were already yawning before them. Those scribes, indeed, did not mention the fact, that along with the Catholic Church the Emperor had also re-established the Protestant Church in France. They forgot to state that in France the Protestants had long been *emancipated*; and stood, then and thenceforth, on a footing of perfect equality with their Catholic neighbours.

The Irish Catholics did not yet know the meaning of this new outbreak of foaming rage against them and their religion; and at any rate thought Mr. Pitt must be above all the storm of stupid malice which they saw raging,—as, in fact, he was, but he was not above exciting it and directing it to his own ends.

The leading part of the Irish Catholics, most of whom had supported the Union in plenary confidence of the professions made by Mr. Pitt and Lord Cornwallis that emancipation would immediately follow it, held frequent meetings in Dublin, in order to concert the most efficient means of rendering available Mr. Pitt's disposition to favour their cause, which they fondly assumed had returned with him into power. The general precipitancy of the body to bring the ministerial sincerity to the test, was with difficulty repressed by those who were considered to be most directly under the influence of the Castle. An adjournment was carried from December 31st to February 16th.

Parliament met again, January 15, 1805; and again His Majesty's speech contained not one word in reference to Ireland. It mentioned the prompt and decisive steps which he had been obliged to take in order to guard against the effects of hostility from Spain.\* The speech also de-

nounced the "violence and outrage" of the French Government, and spoke vaguely of the European coalition against France which Mr. Pitt was engaged in negotiating.

Several interesting debates passed in the Commons upon Sir Evan Nepean's motion for suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, which he proposed to extend to six weeks after the commencement of the next session of Parliament. He and Mr. Pitt urged, as the grounds for that harsh measure, that there were then at Paris committees of United Irishmen, who communicated with traitors in Ireland upon the most efficient means of effecting the invasion of that country; and when the House considered the *humane and just character of Lord Hardwicke*, they would with plenitude of confidence deposit that extraordinary power in his hands. Mr. Fox, on the other hand, warmly replied that the character of the Lord-Lieutenant was immaterial. The Constitution taught him to be jealous of granting extraordinary powers to any man; and if there were a possibility of their being abused; the mild character of the man in whom they were to be vested was the worst of arguments. If the powers were not necessary, they ought not to be granted; and if necessary, and the Lord-Lieutenant were not fit to be entrusted with them, he ought to be removed. Mr. Fox added that it was universally admitted that Ireland was at that moment as tranquil as any county in England; why not as well, then, propose to suspend the Constitution in England? But the bill passed: out of two hundred and thirteen members, only fifty-four voted against it.

A respectable Catholic writer,\* speaking of this debate, says: "Ireland in the meantime was loyal and tranquil, in spite of the aspersions and calumnies of the hired writers, and the unsupported charges of some of the Ministerialists in Parliament." Now Ireland was, indeed, "tranquil," at that moment, but not "loyal," if loyalty means attachment to the King of England. Irish Catholics of that day who could be loyal, must have been something more, or a good deal less, than men. Tranquil they were, but had never been better disposed to rise around the standards of a French army; and, indeed, the English Government knew then, as they know now, that tranquillity is a bad omen for loyalty, and that the Irish people are never so eager to shake off the British yoke as when sheriffs present judges with white gloves.

\* Plowden's *Post-Union History*.

\* This meant the sudden attack upon a Spanish fleet in harbour, previous to a declaration of war; one of those feats of arms (like the seizure of the Danish fleet under similar circumstances) by which Great Britain at length was enabled to boast that she "ruled the seas."



On the 16th of February, pursuant to adjournment, a numerous meeting of Catholic noblemen, gentlemen, and merchants, was held in Dublin, at which they unanimously entered into the following resolutions: *First.* That the Earl of Fingal, the Honourable Sir Thomas (now Lord) French, Sir Edward Bellew, Councillor Denys Scully, and Mr. Ryan, should be appointed as a deputation, to carry into effect the under-mentioned instructions; and that the other Roman Catholic Peers (of whom Lords Gormans-town and Southwell were then present) should be requested to accede to the deputation. *Second.* That the petition prepared by the Catholic Committee, and reported by Lord Fingal to that meeting, should be then signed by Lord Fingal and the other Catholic gentlemen, and that the above-mentioned deputies should present it to Mr. Pitt, with a request that he would bring it into Parliament.

Now was seen the excessive duplicity of Lord Hardwicke. He had been selected from the mass of the peerage as the best qualified to resist the emancipation of Ireland, under the insidious mission of reconciling her to thralldom. The ordinary manœuvres of the Castle upon Lord Fingal and other leading men of the Catholic body, to induce them to hold back their petition, had failed. His lordship could not, consistently with his duty to his employers, back, countenance, or recommend their petition, however just the claims, however worthy the claimants. But now, under the British Minister's assurance of a decided majority against the question, the Irish Viceroy affected to favour the Catholics' application by discountenancing counter petitions, as encroaching upon the freedom of Parliamentary debate. He even did one act which was intended as a proof of his sincerity. He dismissed the notorious Mr. John Giffard from a lucrative post for having proposed and carried, in the Dublin Corporation, some violent resolutions *against* Catholic Emancipation. He thought the sacrifice of one man was a trifle, and so punished Giffard for opposing a measure which he himself was doubly pledged to resist.

The Catholic deputies proceeded to London, and had their conference with Mr. Pitt on the 12th of March. Eight deputies attended the conference—viz., the Earl of Shrewsbury (Waterford and Wexford in Ireland), Earl of Fingal, Viscount Gormans-town, Lord Southwell, Lord Trimblestown, Sir Edward Bellew, Councillor Denys Scully, and Mr. Ryan. They told Mr. Pitt they regarded him as

their "sincere friend;" that they hoped everything from his liberality and justice, and so urged him to present their petition to Parliament.

Mr. Pitt declared "that the confidence of so very respectable a body as the Catholics of Ireland was highly gratifying to him;" but he added, that the time had not come; there were obstacles—that, in short, he would not present their petition at all. After many arguments and much urgency, they at last intreated him only to lay it on the table of the House of Commons. They would authorize him to state to the House that *they did not press the immediate adoption of the measure prayed for.*

Mr. Plowden, who had the best means of knowing what passed at this conference, says, with asperity, that Mr. Pitt "drily repeated his negative;" and then adds, "He neither threw out a suggestion for their applying to any other channel, nor gave any ground for presuming that the introduction of the petition through any Ministerial member would be likely to soften his opposition, for he very explicitly declared that *he should feel it his duty to resist it.* The only advice he condescended to offer was to withdraw their petition altogether, or at all events to postpone it."\*

The "leading Catholics" found themselves now completely in the position of dupes; and they richly deserved it, for having assented to the destruction of their country's national independence, seduced by the professions of an English Minister. At all events the time was not yet come, nor the man. But a more vigorous race of Catholics was growing up; and in especial one bold, blue-eyed young man, who was then carrying his bag in the hall of the Four Courts—destined one day to hold the great leading brief in the mighty cause of six millions of his countrymen. O'Connell was not yet a leading Catholic, but was fast becoming well known in his own profession; and an Orange judge in a party case preferred to see any other advocate pleading before him.

The Catholic delegates next applied to Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, who agreed to present the petition—one in the Lords, the other in the Commons. This was done on the 25th of March. When Lord

\* Mr. Pitt might on this occasion have candidly acknowledged what Lord Hawkesbury publicly and officially declared in the House of Lords, March 26, 1807, in debating the grounds of the Grenville Administration's retiring from office, that although Mr. Pitt had in 1801 gone out of office on that question, yet on his return *he voluntarily engaged that he never would again bring the subject under the consideration of His Majesty.*



Grenville moved in the House of Lords that it should lie on the table, Lord Auckland rose with precipitancy, and observed with some warmth, that as far as his ears could catch the tenor of it, it went to overthrow the whole system of Church and State; and if the prayer of it were to be granted, he should soon see a Protestant Church without a Protestant congregation, and a Protestant King with a Popish Legislature. He expressed great anxiety that the question should be calmly and fully discussed, summoned the Reverend Bench to arm themselves for the combat, &c. The venerable Lord Eldon objected even to the formal motion that the petition should be printed. After Mr. Fox presented it in the House of Commons, the matter stood over for early days in May in both Houses of Parliament. Petitions against it were presented from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, from the cities of London and Dublin, the County Fermanagh, and other Corporations and public bodies.

Lord Fitzwilliam, who was still a friend to the Catholics, and well remembered how Mr. Pitt had cheated *him* also upon that question, conceived the idea of bringing Mr. Grattan into the debate; and accordingly induced the Honourable C. L. Dundas to vacate his seat for the borough of Malton, and Mr. Grattan was returned for it.

On the appointed day the discussion in the Lords arose, on motion to commit the bill. After some other Peers had been heard, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland (an Orangeman) gave his decided opposition to the motion before the House, and urged every resistance in his power to a "measure subversive of all the principles which placed the House of Brunswick upon the throne of these realms."

Lord Camden found full reason for opposing the motion on the grounds upon which the Irish Parliament had negatived the question, whilst he had the honour of being placed at the head of the Irish Government.

The Bishop of Durham, the wealthiest prelate in Europe, and who naturally valued that constitution in Church and State which had made him so, urged that the motion could not be acceded to without danger to the Church and State. It would be a direct surrender of the security of the best constitution in the world.

Lord Redesdale made a very violent speech against the motion. He said: "To pass such a measure would be to take the titles and lands from the Protestant

hierarchy and give them to the Catholic bishops." He said, further: "If the Catholic hierarchy were abolished, something might be done to conciliate the Catholic body; and to the generality of that body he was confident the abolition of the hierarchy would be extremely grateful."

Lord Carleton, an Irish Judge, ran over all the usual Protestant phrases about the faithlessness and cruelty of Catholics. He laid much stress upon certain "maps of the forfeited estates," which, he said, had been prepared, in order to guide the proceedings of *resumption*.\* Lord Carleton added a singular legal opinion: "That the spiritual supremacy of the Church was by the law of this country vested in the Crown; and surely it was a piece of the highest contumacy in a sect of His Majesty's subjects to deny that supremacy, and to vest the control in a foreign potentate."

Lord Buckinghamshire, like all other opposers of the motion, spoke much of his own disposition to liberality and conciliation; denied that any such pledge for emancipation, as had been alluded to, was or could have been given, and deemed it most inflammatory to allege that the Catholics would be sore or irritated at the refusal of the prayer of the petition.

After an astonishing mass of benighted spite and bigotry had been vented all night, at six in the morning a division was had. The motion to commit was rejected by a majority of one hundred and twenty-nine; and so ended Emancipation in the Lords for that time.

In the Commons, Mr. Fox introduced the same subject in a long and able speech. He gave a history of the Penal Code, and of its successive relaxations; pointed out how useless, and at the same time how irritating, were the remaining links in the chain which it was then proposed to strike off; proved that the Catholics had received assurances, on the part of Mr. Pitt, which induced them as a body to remain passive at the time of the Union, and that now those pledges ought to be redeemed. Mr. Fox concluded an excellent address by saying, "He relied on the affection and loyalty of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, but he would not press them too far—he would not draw the cord too tight. It was surely too much to expect that they would always fight for a constitution in the benefits of which they were assured they never should participate

\* His lordship thus described a map of Ireland prepared by the antiquary, Mr. Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, showing the situation of the tribal lands of the ancient clans before the reign of Elizabeth.



equally with their fellow-subjects. Whatever was to be the fate of the petition, he rejoiced at having had an opportunity of bringing it under their consideration, and moved to refer it to a committee of the whole House."

The famous Doctor Duigenan had the courage to reply to Mr. Fox, although he saw Grattan opposite, who already threatened him with his eye. He opposed the motion in a long speech, which lasted above three hours, the general spirit and substance of which was to prove that by the ancient councils of the Catholic Church and her invariable doctrine, no Catholic could take an oath from the obligations of which he could not, at the will of the priest, be released; that the Catholics maintained no faith was to be kept with heretics, and such they considered every denomination of Christians but themselves; and that it was impossible for a Catholic to be truly loyal to a Protestant King. He contended that the ninety-one persons who had signed the Catholic petition did not, by any means, represent the body of the Irish Catholics; he assumed that none of the clergy had signed, because they still maintained the obnoxious doctrines which the best-informed of the laity wished to renounce.

He contended that the oath of supremacy (swearing that the King is head of the Church) was a mere *simple oath of allegiance*, and that it imported neither exclusion nor restriction to any but traitors. He commented largely upon the oath of canonical obedience to the Pope taken by the Catholic bishops; inveighed fiercely against Doctor Hussey, the late Catholic Bishop of Waterford, for forbidding his flock to send their children to Protestant schools for education; and he drew the conclusion from Doctor Hussey's remark—that the loss or abandonment of his religion by the Catholic soldier might be felt in the day of battle—that, *in plain English, the Romish soldier might then turn upon and assassinate his officer or desert to the enemy*. This measure would let in a universal deluge of atheism, infidelity, and anarchy. It would admit the Pope's supremacy over the Church of these realms; it would violate the conditions of both Unions, with Scotland and with Ireland; and to tender to His Majesty a bill of that import for his royal signature would be to insult him, by supposing him capable of violating his coronation oath.

Mr. Grattan rose, and his rising was greeted with breathless attention. He had never appeared in that House before;

and his fame, as a noble orator and incorruptible patriot, impressed the English legislators more than they would have liked to own to themselves.

Mr. Grattan said he rose to defend the Catholics from Doctor Duigenan's attack, and the Protestants from his defence. The question for their consideration was not, as the learned member had stated, whether they should now qualify or still keep disqualified some few Roman Catholic gentlemen for seats in Parliament, or certain officers in the State; but whether they would impart to a fifth portion of the population of their European empire a community in that which was their vital principle and strength, and thus confirm the integrity and augment the power of the Empire. That learned member had emphatically said that the people of Ireland, to be good Catholics, must be bad subjects; that the Irish Catholic is not, never was, and never can be, a faithful subject to a Protestant English King. Thus has he pronounced against his countrymen three curses—eternal war with each other, eternal war with England, eternal peace with France. He fully answered the doctrinal parts of Doctor Duigenan's speech, and concluded that as the Catholic religion was professed by above two-thirds of all Christendom, it would follow that Christianity was in general a curse; but of his own countrymen he had added that they were depraved by religion, and rendered perverse by nativity; that is to say, according to him, blasted by their Creator, and damned by their Redeemer. Mr. Grattan closed an animated detail of the evils of the prospective system with observing that, if they wished to strip rebellion of its hopes, and France of her expectations, they should reform their policy; they would gain a conquest over their enemies when they had gained a victory over themselves.

The speaker entered into long detail of all the dealings of the Irish Government with the Catholics on this question; but it would be in vain, with our limits, to attempt even a full abstract of this remarkable speech. When the Parliament of Ireland, he said, rejected the Catholic petition, and assented to the calumnies uttered against the Catholic body, on that day she voted the Union, and should they adopt a similar conduct on that day they would vote the separation. He was surprised to see them running about like grown-up children in search of old prejudices, preferring to buy foreign allies by subsidies rather than to subsidize fellow-subjects by privileges. He figured them then drawn up, sixteen against thirty-six



millions, and paralyzing one-fifth of their own numbers by excluding them from some of the principal benefits of their constitution at the very time they said all their numbers were inadequate unless inspired by those very privileges. Such a system could not last; if the two islands renounced all national prejudices, they would form a strong empire in the west to check, and ultimately to confound, the ambition of the enemy.

Mr. Perceval, a pious man, and one of the first of the race of "saints" (he was then Attorney-General), opposed the motion, for the sort of reasons, and in the precise style, of some conventicle preacher. "But," he said, "he remarked the indisposition of the house to listen to him; which he was not surprised at; for he was conscious that, after the blaze of Mr. Grattan's eloquence, everything that fell from him must appear vapid and uninteresting. Had he been in the Irish Parliament, he never would have consented to grant the elective franchise, nor the establishment of Maynooth for educating the Catholic."

Mr. Perceval knew that he could safely pay a tribute to Mr. Grattan's eloquence, and disparage himself with all the humility of a "saint." He felt that the grand cause of Ascendancy was safe in that House, and that though Grattan spoke with the tongue of men and angels, he could not prevent or reverse the inevitable decision.

The motion was supported by some liberal Englishmen (for there is always a small minority of liberal Englishmen), and warmly advocated by George Ponsonby; when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Pitt, arose. His speech was highly characteristic. He said:—

"He was favourably disposed to the *general principle* of the question; but, differing in many points from those who had introduced or supported the motion, he thought fit to observe that he had never considered the question as involving any claim of right. *Right* was totally independent of circumstances; *expediency* included the consideration of circumstances, and was wholly dependent upon them. Upon the principle of expediency he felt that, entertaining as he did a wish for the repeal of the whole Penal Code, and a regret that it had not been abolished, he felt that in no possible case before the Union could those privileges have been granted to the Catholics with safety to the existing Protestant establishment in Church and State. After that measure, he saw the matter in a different light; though certainly no pledge was ever given to the Catholics that their

claims should be granted. [Nobody had ever said such a pledge had been given; the pledge *he* had given was, that he, Mr. Pitt, would support the measure, and would never hold office without making it a Ministerial question.] But he said there were *irresistible obstacles* [which he had taken care to raise up]; and should the question not be carried, and he saw no probability that it would, the only effect of agitating it would be to excite hopes that would never be gratified, and to give rise to expectations which were sure to terminate in disappointment."

He next took another line of argument. "They were anxious to conciliate the Catholics; but let them not, in so doing, irritate a much larger portion of their fellow-subjects. Whilst they drew together the bonds which united one class of the population, let them not give offence to another part of it, whose loyalty and attachment [to their own interests] had long been undoubted. He should disguise the truth if he did not say the prevailing opinion against the petition was strong and rooted. He should, therefore, act contrary to all sense of his duty, and inconsistently with the original line he had marked for his conduct, were he to countenance that petition in any shape, or to withhold giving his negative to the proposition for going into the committee."

Sir John Newport, of Waterford, rose with the special object of rebutting the assertions contained in the petition from the ignorant Orange Corporation of Dublin. The corporators had asserted (in utter ignorance) that the Irish Catholics were placed on a footing of political power not enjoyed by any other dissenters from an Established Church in Europe. Sir John Newport said he would give one instance to the contrary—he might have given many:—

"The States of Hungary," he said, "resembled our Constitution more closely than any other Continental establishment. They formed a population of above seven millions, and had for centuries suffered all the evils of being divided by religion, distracted by the difference of their tenets, and restrictions on account of them. At length, in 1791, at the most violent crisis of disturbance, a Diet was convened, at which a decree was passed by which full freedom of religious faith, worship, and education, was secured to every sect without exception. The tests and oaths were rendered unobjectionable to any native Hungarian, be his religion what it would; and then came the clause which gave them precisely what these petitioners have in contemplation,—That 'the public



offices and honours, whether high or low, great or small, should be given to natural-born Hungarians who had deserved well of their country, and possessed the other requisite qualifications, *without any respect to their religion.*' The Diet consisted of nearly four hundred members, with a splendid civil establishment for the Roman Catholic religion. The measure was adopted in a most critical moment, and it had successfully passed an ordeal of fourteen revolutionary years—equal, in fact, to the trial of a century less disturbed and agitated."

Mr. Maurice Fitzgerald supported the motion; and solemnly declared that when he voted for Union in the Irish Parliament, it was in view and contemplation of that measure, for no man could deny that the impression then made on the Catholic mind was that Ministers, as well as Opposition, were in favour of their claims. They expected, of course, that much more attention would be paid to them now.

Colonel Archdall (a North of Ireland Orangeman) asserted, that the bulk of the Roman Catholics were not anxious about the result of the question; if the cause were a good one, it had been very ill-conducted; and he gave the motion his decided negative.

Sir John Cox Hoppesley supported the motion to commit the bill; and in order, as he said, to obviate the objections of those who apprehended the supremacy of the Pope over Irish Catholics, he suggested that the Catholic Church in Ireland should be put upon the footing of the Gallician Church; in other words, that the Crown should have a *veto* upon the appointment of bishops by the Pope. This was the first distinct mention of the *veto* in Parliament—a question which afterwards led to much grave dissension in Ireland.\*

\* But this was not the origin of the *veto*. It had been a favourite scheme of Mr. Pitt's since 1799. In that year an insidious proposal had been made to give a State endowment to Catholic bishops in Ireland, on certain conditions, amounting in principle to the *veto*. Mr. Plowden relates that the prelates did not then fully appreciate the object of this proposal; which was no less than to buy them up, and make them a species of ecclesiastical police. Plowden tells us:—

"It was admitted by a large number of the prelates, then convened in Dublin, that it ought to be thankfully accepted.

"They went a step further, and signed the following resolution: 'That in the appointment of the prelates of the Roman Catholic religion to vacant sees within the kingdom, such interference by the Government, as may enable it to be satisfied with the loyalty of the person appointed, is just, and ought to be agreed to.' And for the purpose of giving it effect, they further resolved: 'That after the usual canonical election, the president should transmit the name of the elected to Government, which in one month after such transmission

Honourable H. Augustus Dillon denied that the question involved a party measure. It affected the safety of Ireland, and the vitality of the empire. The hearts of the Irish people had been alienated by martial law, and the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, and by other severities and oppressions. Were that measure allowed to pass, such expedients would cease to be necessary, and the mass of brave and grateful people would present a firm, an iron bulwark for the protection of the country against the designs of the enemy.

On the whole, it was apparent in this famous debate that all the lofty intellect, and all the honest principles, in the British Parliament were in favour of the measure of Catholic Emancipation. But that was a contemptible minority. The question upon the motion of Mr. Fox was negatived—ayes, 124; nays, 336; majority, 212.

So Catholic Emancipation was set at rest in both Houses of the British Parliament; and the "Protestant Interest," and the Constitution in Church and State, were saved, it was hoped, for ever.

## CHAPTER XII.

1804—1806.

Prosecution of Judge Fox—His Offence, Enforcing Law on Orangemen—Prosecution of Judge Johnson—His Offence, Censuring the Irish Government—Decline of Pitt's Power—Castlereagh Defeated in Down County—Successes of Buonaparte—Cry for Peace—Death of Mr. Pitt—Whig Ministry—Mr. Fox—His Opinion of the Union—First Whisper of "Repeal"—Release of State Prisoners—Dismissal of Lord Redesdale as Chancellor—Duke of Bedford Viceroys—The Catholics Cheated Again—Equivocation of the Viceroy—Ponsonby—Curran's Promotion—The Armagh Orangemen—Mr. Wilson the Magistrate.

SOME very extraordinary proceedings took place in this and subsequent sessions of Parliament, with respect to two of the most irreproachable of the Irish judges—Mr. Justice Fox and Mr. Justice Johnson.

In the summer of 1803 Judge Fox had gone the North-west Circuit, a region

should return the name of the elected (if unobjectionable), that he might be confirmed by the Holy See. If he should be objected to by Government, the president on such communication should, after the month, convene the electors in order to choose some other candidate.' Mr. Pitt never lost sight of this insidious negotiation, into which he had seduced a certain number of the unsuspecting prelates. This was the foundation-stone of that deep-laid plan of Mr. Pitt and his associates, to seduce or force the Irish Catholics into the same state of schism from the Church of Rome as that which took place in England in the reign of Henry VIII. This was the origin of that vital question of *veto*."



which was then predominated over by a few great Orange magnates, and magistrates who were their very humble servants, and the savage tyrants of the poor country people, who were principally Catholics. As senior judge it was Judge Fox's duty to charge the Grand Juries; and in Longford, at Enniskillen, and Lifford, he made them very paternal and loyal addresses; intended, as usual, for the whole of the people of those counties. Endeavouring to awaken them to a high sense of the dangers which hovered over them from external and internal foes, he called upon the exertion of their best energies. He reminded them of the recent horrors of the 23d of July, and warned them of the dangers of the leaders of that rebellion still remaining at large. He strongly commented on the nature and extent of that insurrection, and on the origin and motives of the persons engaged in it. He exhorted them to *union amongst themselves—to forget their religious animosities, by which the country had been so long weakened and divided*, and to join in presenting a dutiful and loyal address to the throne, praying his Majesty to strengthen the executive government of the country, &c.

Now, if Judge Fox had done nothing more than utter in the ears of an Orange Grand Jury the words above printed in italics, he could never have been forgiven. But he did worse. When he came to Enniskillen, and proceeded, as his duty was, to deliver the jail there, the names of two prisoners were returned to him by the jailer, who had been committed by the Earl of Enniskillen, as a magistrate, but without any offence being charged against them. Their names were Breslin and Maguire. The committals were called for and produced—they specified no offence; but in one of them was an order to keep poor Breslin in solitary confinement. The judge thereupon ordered the prisoners to be brought to the bar in order to inquire of them the facts alleged against them. The jailer then informed the judge that those two prisoners were taken out of his custody on the 18th of August (that is, during the assizes), by a military guard sent for the purpose.\* The judge felt this to be a high indignity offered to His Majesty's commission, and inquired if Lord Enniskillen were in

\* Maguire never was heard of more. Breslin was hurried off by soldiers to a military prison, where he was kept a long time; then tried by court-martial on the charge of trying to seduce a soldier to desert, convicted, and sentenced to be hung. He cut his throat to avoid the execution of the sentence, but the wound was not mortal; and he was hung near Enniskillen, with the rope forced into the bleeding gash.

town. On learning that he was at his country seat (Florence Court), he desired a friend of his lordship's to go over to him, with full instructions to relate the whole faithfully, make his compliments, and intreat his lordship's attendance in court on the next day, which was the last day of the assizes. The judge having waited in court to as late an hour as he could for the appearance of Lord Enniskillen, and having repeatedly inquired for him, he found it his duty, upon his lordship's non-appearance, to fine him in each of those cases £100—£200 in all. But the audacity of the judge in looking into the doings of Orange magistrates did not stop here. In the same county, Fermanagh, Mr. Stewart was fined £50 for committing one Neale Ford to the jail of Enniskillen without any charge on oath having been made against him, and releasing him on the eve of the assizes without taking bail for his appearance. Mr. Pallas was fined £20, as well as Mr. Webster, for releasing without bail a prisoner charged with a capital offence. But the prisoner was of the religion of Mr. Pallas.

When the judge came to Lifford, in Donegal, amongst the presentments tendered by the Grand Jury to the judge for his *fiat*, was one for a very large sum to be levied upon occupiers of land, under pretence of repaying Government for money advanced to pay bounties to three hundred and fifty men, the quota of that county, under the "Army of Reserve Act." But not one man of that force had been recruited; although it was the duty of the Marquis of Abercorn, as Governor of the county, to have caused that recruiting to be effected. The presentment of the Grand Jury, then, was a fraud upon the public. Judge Johnson refused to put his *fiat* on it, and publicly censured Lord Abercorn for neglect of duty—Lord Abercorn! the great patron and favourite of the Orange Society of that region. Such a judge as this, it was evident, was somehow to be got rid of.

Many months after the occurrences above-mentioned, the Marquis of Abercorn, in a most malignant and vindictive speech in the House of Lords, brought the conduct of Judge Fox before their lordships. He said, "that he had grave and serious matters of complaint to bring before their lordships against one of His Majesty's judges, in which the administration of justice was deeply concerned."

There ensued one of the most extraordinary State prosecutions ever seen in any country—the House of Lords, which had no original jurisdiction, undertaking to make itself a court to try a judge on a



criminal charge. The distinct charges were numerous, including many cases of "unjust fines," "excessive" fines, partiality, seeking to bring Lord Abercorn into contempt, casting censure on Lord Enniskillen, impeding the course of justice, and the like; and the Protestant interest of the North of Ireland was filled with anxiety for the result. Lord Abercorn pressed these prosecutions with wonderful virulence; Lord Hardwicke and the Irish Government aided it.\* The public purse was opened to pay for it. A great mass of evidence (all *ex parte*) was produced. The proceedings lasted three years; and the excellent judge was ruined in health and fortune. At last, on the motion of Lord Grenville, the House of Lords voted, by a small majority, that the proceedings *should be quashed*. The cost to the public in the prosecution of this case amounted to £30,000.

On the division in the House of Lords, the old Lord Thurlow voted for getting rid of the whole matter, as unconstitutional and vexatious. He said it was a proceeding "to gratify the malignant resentments of individuals who fancied themselves insulted and exposed by any instance of virtuous independence upon the Bench."

Lord Eldon voted for continuing the prosecution to the end; and the Duke of Cumberland (Queen Victoria's uncle), an Orangeman, and special friend of Lord Abercorn, strongly opposed Lord Grenville's motion. "He trusted," he said, "and *expected*, that the matter would not be put off *sine die*." His Royal Highness was naturally of opinion that no justice could be done in Ireland if there were to be judges going round checking the wholesome severities of the very masters of lodges.

It is but justice towards the British House of Lords to admit, that after spending the public time and the public money for three years in prosecuting a virtuous judge, *because* he was a virtuous judge, did at last grow ashamed of the foul transaction, and by a small majority thrust it out of Court.

The case of Mr. Justice Johnson, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, was even more extraordinary. Some anonymous Irishman, signing himself "*Juvena*," had, in November of 1803, immediately after Robert Emmet was executed, pub-

lished a series of letters in Cobbett's *Political Register*, containing severe animadversions upon Lord Redesdale, Lord Hardwicke and his government, upon the public proceedings of Secretaries Wickham and Marsden, upon a charge delivered by Mr. Justice Osborne, and other matters. No government in Ireland ever before had the press so thoroughly corrupted or intimidated as that of Lord Hardwicke; and the first of the "*Juvena*" letters was sent to Mr. Cobbett avowedly because every printer in Dublin had refused to publish it. The sturdy William Cobbett (who was then, and for many years after, a sharp thorn in the side of Pitt and Castlereagh) admitted the letter at once to his *Register*; and then several others. These letters excited much attention, and extremely exasperated the Government, because they were evidently the production of some personage highly placed, who knew the secret machinations of the Irish officials against the people.

Great efforts were made to discover the audacious "*Juvena*;" but in the meantime, as the next best thing, the Attorney-General prosecuted Cobbett himself for publishing the "libels." His trial took place on May 24, 1804.

Cobbett had an interval of repose from persecution of *two days* allowed him, when, at the suit of the Right Honourable W. C. Plunket, Solicitor-General of Ireland, he was again called on to sustain an action for libels contained in letters signed "*Juvena*," published in the *Register*, reflecting on Mr. Plunket's conduct on the occasion of Robert Emmet's trial. Cobbett was again convicted, and damages were awarded to the plaintiff to the amount of £500.

It was believed, by the Irish Government, that the letters in question had been written by Judge Johnson. On the second trial of Mr. Cobbett, the manuscript of the letter relating to Lord Plunket was produced; and witnesses were easily found to swear that it was in the handwriting of the judge. The Government, therefore, determined to prosecute him also, and to bring him over to London for trial, as the publication had been in the County of Middlesex. But there was a difficulty in the way. There was no law then—no law in existence—giving power to remove offenders from Ireland to England, or *vice versa*, for trial. But Parliament was in session, and a new law was quickly procured, the two principal persons on the committee which framed it being Mr. Perceval, brother-in-law of Lord Redesdale, and Mr. Yorke, brother of Lord Hardwicke, who were

\* The Marquis read, as a part of his speech before the Lords, a letter from the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to the British Minister, in which the judicial conduct of Mr. Justice Fox, on the North-west Circuit, was arraigned in terms of marked repro-  
bation.



two of the persons complaining of being libelled.

A warrant was issued to bring the judge to London, and he was arrested at his house near Dublin. Thus he was taken under an *ex post facto* Act, which his counsel contended could not operate retrospectively.

The matter was discussed during six days, in the King's Bench in Ireland, in January, 1805. The legality of the warrant was confirmed. In the meantime, the *persecuted* judge procured a writ of *Habeas Corpus* from the Court of Exchequer, where the case was argued, February 4th and 7th, and, subsequently, in the Court of Common Pleas; and in both courts the arrest was held good. The judge was then brought over to London, and put on his trial before Lord Ellenborough, November 23, 1805.

Lord Ellenborough, staunch and consistent—always ready to lend the weight of his judicial character and position to the Government on any seditious libel case prosecution—unjustly on this occasion threw discredit on the respectable witnesses produced by Judge Johnson, to prove that the MSS. of the libel prosecuted was not in the handwriting of the defendant. But the jury, misdirected by Lord Ellenborough, brought in a verdict of “guilty;” the Attorney-General, however, never applied for judgment.

It was true, indeed, that Judge Johnson was the author of the letters of “*Juvena*,” which were a very just, necessary, and well-merited castigation of the Irish Government; yet he was found guilty on bad evidence, for the manuscript was not his.\*

The matter, however, was pressed no further. It was judged sufficient to disgrace a judge of the land by a criminal conviction, to ruin him by heavy expenses incurred in his defence, and to render the justice of Westminster Hall auxiliary to the police of Dublin. But the prosecution had caused great scandal by its unusual features; and in order to put as quiet a close to the matter as possible, the Attorney-General was directed, and he, accordingly, did enter a *nolle prosequi* on the record, as of Trinity Term, 1806. The learned judge, whose health was much on the decline, was allowed to retire upon a pension for his life.†

\* “The libel above-mentioned, I know (on the authority of Lord Cloncurry), though the production of Judge Johnson, was sent to Cobbett in the handwriting of the judge's daughter.”—*Madden*.

† This excellent judge afterwards, in his retirement in France, wrote a very excellent treatise on the *Military Defence of Ireland*, under the name of Captain Philip Roche Fermoij. This

The treatment of these two honest judges was a significant warning to the judges of Ireland—first, that they were not to embarrass Orange justice with *their* justice; and second, that they were not to presume to say that a Lord-Lieutenant, or Chancellor, or Secretary, could do wrong.

In this year, Mr. Pitt's political power began to decline; and many of his partizans fell from him. Lord Sidmouth deserted him on the occasion of the impeachment of Lord Melville. Mr. Foster, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, had tendered his resignation; and it was known that Lord Hardwicke was resolved to tender his. The star of the great Minister was growing pale; his Continental combinations against Buonaparte were all failures; and men were already beginning to speculate upon their chances under Mr. Pitt's successor, about the time when Parliament was suddenly prorogued on July 12th.

The defection of Lord Sidmouth, the impeachment of Lord Melville, and consequent shiftings in the Cabinet, created the necessity of Lord Castlereagh's vacating his seat for the County Down, in order to accept the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies and War Department. He sought a re-election for Down; but in that county there was a very strong feeling against him on account of the outrage put upon the Marquis of Downshire, by the Irish Government (when Castlereagh was Secretary), in dismissing him from the command of his regiment, and from the rank of Lord-Lieutenant of the county, because he had recommended petitions against the Union. Lord Castlereagh, most unexpectedly, found himself at the foot of the polls through the Downshire influence; and had to return to London and accept a seat for one of the “pocket boroughs” of the Government. This defeat by Castlereagh is said to have been felt as a severe blow by Mr. Pitt in his already failing fortunes. Mr. Plowden says it was a “triumph over political profligacy which was hailed by the nation at large;” but, in truth, the event had a much narrower significance: it was simply a triumph of the Downshire interest over the rival Stewart interest in the County Down. Political profligacy remained as before. But what really broke down Mr. Pitt was the success of the French armies in Germany.

The total failure of all his plans on the Continent, and the vast ascendancy which

work has specially in view a defence of the country by the inhabitants of it against the English, and has been much studied since that time.



Napoleon had acquired by his late conquest and treaty, had filled the unbiassed part of the British nation with dissatisfaction and dismay.

The campaign was only opened in September, and Napoleon, with the velocity of the eagle, marched into the heart of Germany, and took an Austrian army, under General Mack, prisoners at Ulm. On the 2d of December, he gained the renowned victory of Austerlitz, which was followed by the treaty of Presburg, signed on the 26th of the same month. This dissolved the new confederacy, and blasted Mr. Pitt's last hopes on the Continent.

All England cried out for peace, and for an administration which would give her peace. Austria was dismembered, Russia debilitated, Prussia neutralized, if not treacherously gone over to the enemy, Hanover lost to the King of England, and the British forces were too late in the field even to make any important diversion against the triumphant legions of France. Lord Melville (the former Secretary Dundas) was pleading to an impeachment before the House of Lords; Lord Castlereagh had returned from his own country, baffled and discredited. All these things together preyed on Mr. Pitt's mind, and ruined his already frail health. Parliament met on the 20th of January, 1806; and three days after, William Pitt died. His last words were: "*Oh! my country!*"—meaning England alone; to Ireland he had ever been a bitter, and at last a mortal enemy.

Lord Hawkesbury was at first named First Lord of the Treasury, merely to supply the vacancy, without any change of Ministry. His lordship held that office only long enough to hurry through the necessary forms of office to grant to himself the lucrative place of Warden of the Cinque Ports, and then resigned. At last, after some days' delay, and much reluctance on the part of the King, was formed the new Grenville-Fox Ministry,—Lord Grenville being First Lord of the Treasury, and Mr. Fox Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The Duke of Bedford was to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with the Right Honourable William Elliott as Chief Secretary; Right Honourable George Ponsonby as Lord-Chancellor; Mr. Plunket as Attorney-General; and Mr. Bushe as Solicitor-General. In short, it was not only a Whig, but was supposed to be also an *Anti-Union* administration. Reform, Emancipation, Repeal of the Union even—anything in satisfaction of Ireland's just claims—was at first imagined to be possible under such a government.

Amongst the earliest Parliamentary proceedings on the change of the Ministry, which in any way related to Ireland; must be noticed Mr. O'Hara's spirited objection to Lord Castlereagh's vote for monumental honours to Marquis Cornwallis, who died in India. He opposed the motion, because he could not with consistency vote funeral honours to a man who had brought about the Union between Great Britain and Ireland; with regard to which he trusted that, some time or other, it would come under the consideration of that House; and if it were not, as he hoped it would be, utterly rescinded, it would, at all events, be considerably modified, and, if possible, ameliorated. Upon this interesting subject Mr. Fox declared that he concurred with the motion; for that the words in which it was expressed did not, in imitation of a late precedent, assert that the object of it was *an excellent statesman*. Although, however, he supported the motion, yet he agreed with Mr. O'Hara in characterizing the Union as *one of the most disgraceful transactions in which the Government of any country had been involved*.

In consonance with this marked reprobation of that fatal measure of Union by the most enlightened and irreproachable member of the new administration, several of the Corporations of Dublin formed meetings to prepare petitions to the Legislature for the Repeal of the Union. Of these, the Company of Stationers, at their hall in Capel Street, gave the example, by appointing a respectable committee of nine to draw up a petition. At a subsequent meeting, however, they resolved not at that moment to embarrass Ministers with their claims.

A few days later, Mr. Fox was called upon in Parliament, by Mr. Alexander, for an explanation of his words relative to the Union.

Mr. Fox conceived he had spoken very intelligibly; but he never refused explanation. He adhered to every syllable he had uttered relative to the Union, upon the motion for funeral honours to Lord Cornwallis. But when he had reprobated a thing done, he said nothing prospectively. However bad the measure had been, an attempt to repeal it without the most urgent solicitation from the parties interested should not be made, and hitherto none such had come within his knowledge.

"The parties interested" are the English, the Scottish, and the Irish people; so that in the apparently explicit reply of Mr. Fox there is a breadth of application sufficient to enable a prudent



statesman to do as he pleases afterwards. Even so early did it become apparent that neither English Tory nor English Whig would ever listen to any proposal for the undoing of that shameful deed. Gradually, as time has worn on, men of all parties in England have become willing to admit that the Union was a foul act, foully accomplished; yet no British Minister, of any party, would dare, for his head, to propose that it be undone. It was thus, in 1806, on the accession of Mr. Fox to office, that the first whisper was heard of that demand which afterwards rang so loud—the Repeal of the Union.

Two or three agreeable incidents at the same time happened in Ireland. The Act for suspending the *Habeas Corpus* had been permitted to expire without any attempt by Government to continue or revive it. Thereupon the several jails in Ireland were cleared of all those State prisoners who could bear the expenses of *Habeas Corpus*, and who had been confined there for two or three years. The restoration to society of many respectable and popular characters, dignified by unmerited sufferings, spread a sympathetic glow of exultation through the people, which broke out into an eagerness to hail the new Governor as their deliverer, and stifled all efforts to procure valedictory addresses to the departing Viceroy, who had so long kept them in bondage. The instantaneous removal of Lord Redesdale from his situation, even before his successor had arrived in Ireland, created much satisfaction throughout every rank of the Catholic population, which he had so coarsely and unfoundedly insulted and traduced. This early and marked removal of Lord Redesdale was a seasonable atonement to the insulted feelings of the Irish Catholics, and was received by them as an earnest of the new Ministers' adopting a new system of measures calculated to secure the internal peace, welfare, and prosperity of Ireland.

As for Lord Hardwicke, after his five years' administration, not even the efforts of his paid press could succeed in procuring him those customary addresses of courtesy which are given to departing Viceroys. The attendance even of his favoured yeomanry of Dublin was solicited to perform the last honour to the ex-Governor, and was refused in the first instance. Out of all Ireland, addresses on his departure came only from Dublin, the County Mayo, and the loyal Crossmolina Cavalry. He sailed from the Pigeon House on the 31st of March, 1806; and many a curse went after him.

The Duke of Bedford came to Ireland, as was firmly and fondly believed, to carry out the liberal principles which Mr. Fox had always supported for the government of the country. But Mr. Fox had more important business to attend to, in his own estimation, than the affairs of Ireland, which were, as usual, placed in the background. He had upon his hands the difficult business of negotiating a peace with France; and his fast-failing health did not permit him to go into the details of Irish appointments and Irish grievances.

Yet Charles James Fox was of a character noble, open, and generous; as opposite to Mr. Pitt in personal qualities as he was in his place in the House of Commons. If he had, at this juncture, accepted the position of Viceroy—if he had seen with his own eyes the insolent and audacious cruelty of the Orange magistracy, which was now strong enough to brave both law and Government—the too patient suffering of the great mass of the people, and the decaying trade and industry of the towns—it would have been impossible to repress indignation in such a nature as his. But he had been specially brought into power for the purpose of negotiating a peace with France; and this was enough for his diminished energies. Lord Grenville, the Premier Minister, who had been an active agent in carrying the Union, was by no means so favourable to Ireland as the Foreign Secretary. Lord Sidmouth was the boasted and pledged opponent to Catholic concession, under every possible variation of political occurrence. The friends and co-operators of Lord Redesdale, the Attorney and Solicitor-General, retained their situations and confidence. Mr. Alexander Marsden, the secret adviser and machinist of the late administrations, was not displaced. The whole of the Orange magistracy remained undisturbed in the commission of the peace. Even Major Sirr was still seen as the tutelary guardian of the Castle-yard. No floating patronage was removed from any promoter of the late, to countenance or encourage the supporters of the new, system. The name of Grattan, the friend and father of Irish liberty, was not seen on the list of changes; and Mr. Curran, the unwavering asserter of Ireland's rights and freedom, remained nearly five months unpromoted.

As for the Catholics, they were deluded again. They soon found that there was no disposition to disquiet the United Kingdom with an importunate insistence upon any claims of theirs. But at the



first moment of the change of Viceroys they were so confident of their affairs being now in good hands, that they resolved not to press the matter too keenly. A newly constituted Catholic Committee met in March, before the Duke of Bedford had yet arrived at Mr. M'Donnell's house, in Allen Court, and there resolved, with the exception of two dissenting voices, that it was inexpedient to press a discussion of the Catholic question during the present session of Parliament; and that it would be proper to present an address, on behalf of the Catholics, to the Duke of Bedford, congratulating him on his appointment to the chief government of Ireland, and expressing their confidence in the wisdom and abilities of the illustrious personages who composed the present administration.

Indeed, nothing can well be conceived more helpless than the management of the Catholic cause during the whole of the Bedford administration. A Mr. Ryan, a merchant, who had a large house in Marlborough Street, threw his house open to informal meetings of active members of the Committee, and entered into correspondence with Mr. Fox as an authorized agent, or rather leader, amongst the Catholics. This produced jealousies and discontents; other meetings were held in various places, where considerable diversity of opinion made itself manifest, chiefly on this question,—Should they press for emancipation at once, or await a more convenient season? Many gatherings of Catholic gentlemen and merchants took place in some of the counties, and strong resolutions were passed. It was manifest that a good share of public spirit had been roused amongst them, but they lacked organization, and sage and bold counsel. The new Viceroy received their ultra-loyal and rather mealy-mouthed addresses with courtesy; but answered them with equivocation. For example, one address, from the Catholics of Dublin, signed by Lords Fingal, Southwell, Keumare, Gormanstown, &c., was presented at the Castle on the 29th of April, 1806. It closes in this humble style:—

“May your Grace permit us to conclude with the expression of those sentiments in which all Irish Catholics can have but one voice. Bound as we are to the fortunes of the empire, *by a remembrance of what is past* and the hope of future benefits, by our preference and by our oaths, should the wise generosity of our lawgivers vouchsafe to crown that hope which their justice inspires, it would no longer be our duty alone, but

our pride, to appear the foremost against approaching danger; and, if necessary, to remunerate our benefactors by the sacrifice of our lives.”

And the gracious reply ends with these words—an admirable sample of the phraseology with which the Catholics were entertained for many years:—

“In the high situation in which His Majesty has been graciously pleased to place me, it is my first wish, as it is my first duty, to secure to all classes and descriptions of His Majesty's subjects in this part of the United Kingdom, the advantages of a *mild and beneficent administration of the law*. With this important object in view, I entertain no doubt that the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the city of Dublin will, by their loyalty to the King, their attachment to the Constitution, and their affection for their fellow-subjects, afford the strongest recommendation to a favourable consideration of *their interests*.”

His Grace takes care to say their “interests;” but it was not their interests they were pleading for, it was their rights; and of rights he said not a word.

But while rival aspirants for leadership of the Catholics were addressing excited meetings, their dissensions were suddenly somewhat allayed by ostentatious warnings contained in the Government newspapers, that they were in danger of bringing themselves within the penalties of the Convention Act. It was a sore and embarrassing suggestion for the struggling Catholics.

The Convention Act, which passed in 1793, was one of the baleful measures of the Pitt system, to muzzle the victim before the infliction of torture; to render the voice of the subject equally powerless for prevention and redress; and, in truth, this formidable Act has remained ever since one of the surest safeguards of British domination in Ireland, as well as one of the conspicuous badges of provincialism, for there is no such law in England.

Lord Chancellor Ponsoby, in whose hands was most of the patronage of Ireland, was not found to exercise that patronage as had been expected by his friends; nor is it interesting, at this time, to enter into those personal and political claims which were either admitted or rejected. Yet there is one case which interests every reader, even at this late day, because it is the case of the illustrious John Philpot Curran. He had been promised, and did expect, on a change of Ministry, a legal position commensurate with his service and standing at the bar.



The new Lord Chancellor neglected him for five months, and then offered him the place of Master of the Rolls, the second Judge in Equity. It was not satisfactory to Curran for several reasons: his practice had been more in law than in equity; and, besides, this place carried with it no political influence. In his letter to Grattan on this subject, he says: "When the party with which I had acted so fairly had, after so long a proscription, come at last to their natural place, I did not expect to have been stuck up into a window, a spectator of the procession." He took the place, however, for the sake of unanimity in the party. A singular demonstration of party malignity was made on this occasion by some of Mr. Curran's professional brethren, at a very numerous bar meeting, convened to take into consideration an address to his honour on his late promotion. His talents were too transcendent, his spirit too independent, his principles too Irish, not to have enemies, who would openly oppose this just tribute to his splendid genius and unrivaled fame. The notice of the intended meeting had no sooner been published, than the prominent supporters of the Ascendancy set every engine to work to prevent, embarrass, and defeat so critical an appeal to the virtue and independence of the Irish bar upon the brightest ornament of their profession, and the staunch and incorruptible friend of their country. On the 7th of July the meeting took place, consisting of two hundred and fifty gentlemen of the bar, of whom one hundred and eighty only chose to divide. Of these, one hundred and forty-six voted for the address; thirty-four opposed it. The question was warmly debated for several hours. In opposition to, and defiance of, the professional powers and political influence of Messrs. Saurin and Bushe, the spirited independence of the bar was honourably asserted, and the talent, integrity, and virtue of the country triumphed over the jealousies and intrigues of the system and its abettors.

While the Catholics found themselves once more thrust back from the threshold of that Constitution which they so much longed to enter, the Northern Orangemen, on their side (who had been a little nervous at first about the advent of these Whigs), soon found that they had no cause for alarm. A very singular correspondence passed this summer between Secretary Elliot and Mr. Wilson, a Tyrone magistrate, touching certain outrages perpetrated on Catholics in his neighbourhood, and particularly the burning down of the house of a man named O'Neill, a

hatter. This outrage was done by night, without any provocation; and was alleged to have been perpetrated in mere wantonness, by a mob of Orangemen coming out of a lodge, and headed by two sons of Mr. Verner, a magistrate, and himself a famous Orangeman. Mr. Wilson's representations were so earnest, demanding inquiry and redress, that Mr. Sergeant Moore was sent down to the neighbourhood, accompanied by a Crown Solicitor, to investigate the facts. Mr. Plowden affirms, on the authority of Mr. Wilson probably, that Sergeant Moore, on his arrival, put himself in communication with the Messrs. Verner, the accused house-burners, to procure him evidence of what took place. "The evidences were brought forward by the young Messrs. Verner; but he could not get anything out of them (after the most strict examination) which could tend towards the crimination of these gentlemen. The house certainly was burned; but the incendiaries could not be identified. It was true the two young Messrs. Verner were there, but only as spectators, after the house was destroyed; but nothing appeared to justify an opinion that either of those gentlemen was concerned in the outrage." Of course, the learned Sergeant returned as wise as he came.

Some days after, Mr. Wilson was summoned to Dublin, and had an interview with Lord Chancellor Ponsonby, who questioned him as to the outrage, and as to the inquiry. Mr. Wilson attempted to make some comment upon the way which the Sergeant had taken for arriving at the facts: the Chancellor twice interrupted him with great energy to declare *that Mr. Sergeant Moore's conduct entitled him to, and possessed the warmest approbation of Government.* Mr. Wilson made some observations on the state of the magistracy in his part of the country, and the Chancellor asked how he proposed to remedy the evil? Mr. Wilson replied that the only effectual mode would be by issuing a general new commission. This would not give any partial offence; and care afterwards should be taken not to admit any improper persons into it. His lordship replied by a smile. This ended his personal communications with Government; but not his correspondence. He wrote several times again on the subject; but without effect. He applied to have his own commission, as a magistrate, extended from Tyrone into Armagh (as he dwelt on the border), in order that he might have some power to protect the poor Catholics, who lived in daily and nightly terror under the shadow of the



*original Orange Lodge*, and in that very neighbourhood which had been the scene of the "Hell-or-Connaught" extortions, ten years earlier; but Mr. Wilson's application was refused. This affair would be in itself too trifling to occupy space in a general narrative like the present, but that it is, unfortunately, only one example of very many of the same kind, of wanton oppression and official connivance, which made the North of Ireland itself a hell for the Catholic people during many a year since, and which is by no means over at this day.

Poor Mr. Wilson, who was so Quixotic as to interest himself for the oppressed Catholics of Tyrone and Armagh, after the refusal of an Armagh commission to that gentleman came to be known, was himself subjected to the outrages of the Protestant "wreckers." His range of offices, filled with hay, was burned down one night; and as he still continued to importune the Secretary and the Chancellor with applications on behalf, not of himself, but of his persecuted neighbours, he was finally (3d of July, 1807) deprived of the commission of the peace for Tyrone, by a regular writ of *Supersedeas*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1806—1807.

Revenue and Debt of Ireland—Rapid Increase of Debt—Drain of Wealth from Ireland—Character of the Imports and Exports—Rackrents, Tithes, &c.—Distress of the People—The "Threshers"—Threshers Hung—Catholic Meetings—Increase of Maynooth Grant—From Apprehension of the Irish College in France—Catholic Officers' Bill—To Promote Depopulation—Bill Abandoned—Change of Ministry—The King demands a No-Popery Pledge—Duke of Cumberland—Perceval Administration—Camden and Castlereagh in Office—No Popery—Recruiting in Ireland—John Keogh on Catholic Officers' Bill—O'Connell—Too Easy Gratitude of the Irish towards Whigs—Populace draw the Duke of Bedford's Coach.

IRELAND, until the period of the consolidation of the National Debts, had a separate Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the actual Chancellor, Sir John Newport, in bringing forward his Irish Budget, in this session of 1806, made as favourable a representation of the finances of the country as possible, according to the usual custom of Finance Ministers. Everything, according to him, "afforded proofs of the increase of prosperity and confidence in the Government." The revenue of Ireland for the year he proposed to increase from £3,360,000 to £3,800,000, by means of several new taxes; but later

in the session Sir John Newport brought in a bill for "Relief of the Irish Poor." On his financial statement, Mr. Parnell drew the attention of the House to the general financial situation of the country, as represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. He calculated that were the debt of Ireland to increase with the same rapidity as at present for fifteen years, it would at that period amount to £120,000,000. He therefore called upon Ministers to adopt some efficient measures for restraining the progress of so alarming an evil.

Mr. Parnell either did not know, or pretended not to know, that Ministers did not regard this as an alarming evil at all, and that it was precisely for this, amongst other great objects, the Union had been effectuated. Mr. Parnell also fell short in his estimate of the rate of future increase of our debt:—"So well have British book-keepers worked our account, that within eleven years (in 1817) our debt was found to amount, not to £120,000,000, but to £130,561,037, and so brought Ireland up to the condition of indebtedness which entitled her to share equally in all the public liabilities of England."

The truth is, that although from the increase of population, and therefore of consumption, the actual amount of taxes now ground out of the Irish people was increasing year by year, those taxes were becoming more and more difficult to pay, and were reducing great numbers of people continually to abject poverty; so that at the very moment when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was felicitating Parliament upon Ireland's financial prosperity, he had also to bring in a bill for relief of the poor. The system of drainage of Ireland for imperial purposes was even then in full operation, although not so highly developed as we have seen it since that day. There were some circumstances then existing which in part counteracted that imperial policy: in the first place, the enfranchisement of Catholics as voters, in 1793, had considerably promoted and increased the practice of giving leases of small farms, so as to create freeholders to support their landlords' interests at county elections; and next, the war in Europe, though occasionally interrupted by short seasons of armed peace, maintained a good price for all kinds of agricultural produce, because the British Government was constantly obliged to victual great fleets and garrisons in all quarters of the world. And as such large numbers of the cultivators of the land had leases, their increased profits



could not be immediately appropriated by their landlords in the shape of increased rents, and so carried off to England to be spent—an inconvenience and loss to the “sister kingdom” which was afterwards fully repaired by the abolition of the “Forty-shilling Freeholders,” as will be seen further on.

In the meantime, however, the war certainly enhanced the profits of Irish agriculture; and although that increase was not altogether for behoof of the people themselves (for much of it could be carried off by taxation, as we have seen, to pay the charges of an unjust debt), yet they were not then by any means so cunningly plundered, so scientifically stripped bare (for want of the requisite machinery), as they have been since, and are now. Population, therefore, was rapidly increasing during all these years of war, although thousands of young Irishmen were each year recruited for

the British army, to fight against Jacobinism, French principles, and the rights of man.

The imports and exports of Ireland continued to increase after the Union in proportion to the increasing population, but by no means at so rapid a rate as during the eighteen years of national independence, when the country had the fostering care of a native Legislature, bad and corrupt as that Legislature was. But it is very material to observe the character of those imports and exports. The imports consisted more and more of British manufactures, and of foreign and colonial produce purchased in England and imported *thence*—the exports more and more of cattle, meat, and grain, raw agricultural produce, and of spirits made from grain. There is an exception in the single article of linen cloth; yet the increase in that trade did not keep pace with the increase of population. In the

ARTICLES IMPORTED INTO IRELAND FOR TEN YEARS PREVIOUS, AND TEN YEARS SUBSEQUENT, TO THE UNION.			ARTICLES EXPORTED FROM IRELAND FOR TEN YEARS PREVIOUS, AND TEN YEARS SUBSEQUENT, TO THE UNION.		
IMPORTS.	Years 1781 to 1800.	Years 1802 to 1821.	EXPORTS.	Years 1781 to 1800.	Years 1802 to 1821.
Drapery, . . . yds.	23,333,381	49,692,058	Linen Cloth, . . . yds.	678,798,721	832,403,860
Sugar, Raw, . . . cwts.	3,796,285	6,089,175	Butter, . . . lbs.	5,777,566	7,915,949
Do., Refined, . . . cwts.	149,513	490,315	Pork, . . . barrels.	2,164,608	2,565,403
Tea, . . . lbs.	22,711,224	66,847,251	Wheat, . . . bushels	1,334,567	4,223,782
Coals, . . . tons.	6,413,557	10,897,970	Barley, . . . bushels.	1,027,323	1,842,993
Iron, . . . cwts.	3,917,882	5,530,682	Meal and Flour, . . . cwts	747,674	1,686,948
Flax-seed, . . . hhds.	837,746	934,049	Candles, . . . cwts.	117,276	205,958
Cotton Wool, . . . cwts.	199,751	538,542	Pigs, . . . No.	70,272	687,569
Tobacco, . . . lbs.	99,402,762	116,112,836	Oats, . . . barrels.	7,650,359	16,112,142
Cotton Yarn, . . . lbs.	4,551,336	19,995,350	Bacon, . . . flitches.	1,013,552	6,248,527
Timber, . . . tons.	298,931	490,245	Horned Cattle, . . . No.	302,287	747,815
Hats, . . . No.	152,366	1,387,209	Spirits, . . . galls.	79,892	10,349,752
Hides, Undressed, . . . No.	84,287	450,031	Lard, . . . cwts.	80,974	313,867
Hops, . . . cwts.	295,234	400,701	Soap, . . . cwts.	92,616	219,506
Hosiery, . . . pieces.	3,606,074	7,995,640	Copper Ore, . . . tons.	9,923	30,243
Oak Bark, . . . bales.	2,224,655	2,550,853	Feathers, . . . cwts.	23,167	106,307
Barilla, . . . cwts.	2,122,932	2,182,060	Kelp, . . . tons.	31,224	64,731

accompanying table of the official returns of the exports and imports for ten years before, and ten years after, the Union (assuming those official returns to be correct), this very material difference may be studied and appreciated; but Mr. Marinton, in his *History of the Maritime Ports of Ireland*, observes of this table: “These returns were no doubt furnished to support the opinions of certain advocates for the Legislative Union, as *wine*, the consumption of which was likely to show the means of the country, if progressing, as correctly as any other article, has been excluded altogether. The import of wine in 1799 was one million two hundred and thirty-eight thousand five

hundred and twelve gallons; and it has gradually decreased since then to five hundred and twelve thousand three hundred and nineteen gallons in 1848, about which quantity still continues to be consumed annually.”

The high “war prices,” then, for agricultural produce, helped to establish a strong current of exportation, in all that species of commodities, out of Ireland into England; while at the same time the increasing absenteeism of Peers and landed proprietors (who now preferred to drink their wine in England) carried off also to that country more and more of the *prices* received in Ireland for those commodities. Thus England was



already gaining every way by the Union, and Ireland losing every way.

Yet the system was not yet by any means perfect. So long as voters for counties had to be created by small freeholds, there were large and increasing numbers of working farmers not wholly at the mercy of their landlords, nor liable to be turned out at the end of any six months. These people could live, and could even employ labour in improvements; so that there was a certain comparative prosperity, although manufactures (except linen) still continued to decline, and the market was flooded with English fabrics. It was not till the peace brought low prices that the series of Irish famines recommenced; and after that, the abolition of the "Forty-shilling Freeholders," then the systematic refusal of leases, then the universal "tenancy at will," and finally the Poor law, rendered the British system as nearly perfect as any system of human invention can be, for reaping the full fruits of the Legislative Union.

It was under great difficulties and oppressions that Irish farmers, at the period we have now arrived at, made out life even so well as they did. Their chief troubles arose from middlemen, rack-rents, tithes, church rates, and the monstrous Grand Jury jobs by which gentlemen accommodated one another, at the expense of the county, with roads and bridges, which were not useful to the county, but were convenient or ornamental to the demesnes of those gentlemen themselves. Those who knew Ireland in the early years of this century can well remember the many cases of exasperating oppression, the scenes of misery and despair, which were caused by *each* one of the plagues above enumerated. In some counties during this very year, 1806, the too long suffering country people were goaded into secret combinations and violent local resistance.

In consequence of recent exactions by the tithe proctors, in the counties of Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, and parts of Roscommon, formerly notable for their pacific and orderly demeanour, a body of people, styling themselves *Threshers* (i. e., of tithe proctors' corn), had appeared in a sort of public confederacy. Up to that time, they had punctiliously confined their outrages and depredations to the collectors of tithes and their underlings. They frankly avowed their reasons for their conduct—viz., that from the late unprecedented rise in the tithes, beyond what had before been insisted upon, the profits of their crops centred almost entirely in the tithe proctor. They sent letters, signed *Cap-*

*tain Thresher*, to the growers of flax and oats, warning them, under severe pains, to leave their tithes in kind on the fields, but on no account to pay any monied composition to their rectors and vicars, or their lessees or proctors. Had the managers of the Bedford administration in *all things* minutely followed the example of their predecessors, those counties would have been proclaimed, and probably a more general insurrection have existed in Ireland than in the year 1798. Many of the task-drivers under the former Government (all found in place were retained, except Lord Redesdale and Mr. Foster, discharged by Mr. Fox) urged the Government to proclaim the disturbed counties, and recommence the discipline and goadings of 1798.

But there was then no motive for resorting to the system of Camden and Carhampton; there was no need now of provoking an insurrection, because the Union had been carried, and all was safe. Accordingly, it was resolved to meet the case of the poor "*Threshers*" by the usual Constitutional measures, assizes, special commissions, packed juries, and the gallows. During the whole of the Bedford administration, not a single measure was adopted nor attempted for the redress or abatement of this curse of tithes; the people were left at the mercy of the grinding proctors and rectors,\* and if they committed "outrage" they were hung. Twelve Threshers were executed in the autumn of this year in Mayo County alone; and others suffered death in Galway, Roscommon, and Longford. There was not the smallest evidence that they had any political views or French principles. They were simply White Boys under another name.

During this summer, the anxious negotiations for peace with France, conducted by Lord Lauderdale, failed, and his lordship returned to London. This was the

\* *Grinding* was not the worst of it. Rectors discovered a practice of swindling farmers in the following manner. In order to encourage the labour and industry of husbandmen in improving their lands, many clergymen granted *leases of tithes* to the tenants during their incumbencies. The lessee, speculating upon the *life* of the incumbent, would make expenditures in the improvement of his lands proportionate to the probability of his own enjoyment of the fruits of his improvements. When the improved lands began to yield increased crops, in order that the church should not lose the advantage of them (*decimæ uberiores*), the incumbent would effectuate an exchange of livings (often preconcerted) with some other lessee of *his* tithes for his incumbency; thus letting each other *gratis* into the full benefit of the tenant's labour and expenditure, upon the speculation of a life interest, at least, in his improvements. In some instances, this fructifying process has been known in two or three years to have doubled, and in others to have trebled the value of the living.



death of Charles James Fox—he died on the 13th of September, and relieved the administration of the embarrassment of the presence of one honest man. The death of Mr. Fox caused no alteration in the Irish Government. In England, Lord Howick quitted the Admiralty, and went to the Foreign Office.

Catholic meetings were held from time to time during the winter of 1806–7, mostly at the Star and Garter in Essex Street. At one of these a committee of twenty-one was appointed to prepare a petition for Catholic Relief; and amongst the twenty-one we find the names of John Keogh, the old and faithful leader of the Catholics, Daniel O'Connell, the young and ultimately victorious leader, Purcell O'Gorman, Doctor Dromgoole, Thomas Wyse, and others, whose names were afterwards household words in every Catholic home during the long struggle for emancipation. A petition was framed, adopted, and committed to Henry Grattan for presentation.

On the 4th of March, 1807, on the report of the Committee of Supply being brought up in Parliament, it appeared that the Committee estimated the grant to Maynooth College at £13,000 instead of £8,000. This increase was, of course, opposed by Mr. Perceval, who always showed himself the most zealous Protestant in Parliament. The increased grant, however, was carried, not through any feeling of liberality towards the Catholics, but for the reasons set forth by Lord Howick in supporting the grant. He said he did so on the large principle of connecting the Irish Catholic with the State. It was then particularly necessary to promote the domestic education of the Catholic clergy, as an institution of great extent had been formed at Paris, at the head of which was a Dr. Walsh, a person of considerable notoriety, with a view to re-establish the practice of Irish Catholic education at that place, and to make that education the channel of introducing and extending the political influence of the French Government<sup>\*</sup> in Ireland.\*

\* "In the latter end of autumn, 1806, some printed copies of an *arrêt*, or decree, signed 'Napoléon, Hugh B. Maret, Champagny, and Walsh, Administrateur Général,' dated Milan, 28th Floreal, An. xiii., uniting the English, Irish, and Scotch Ecclesiastical Establishment, in the French dominions, under the general administration of the Reverend Dr. Walsh, late Superior of the Irish College at Paris, were sent from thence, *via* Hamburg, to England and Ireland. At the same time Dr. Walsh invited the students of St Patrick's Irish College at Lisbon to repair to Paris, to prosecute their studies, and encouraged them to undertake the journey, by promising that the expenses of it would be defrayed. The Roman Catholic archbishops and other prelates, Trustees of Maynooth

English governments, after having so long prohibited by penal laws the education of Catholic youths at home, and having thus driven them abroad for education, were now almost willing to bribe them to stay at home and receive that education, which within the memory of men then living would have merited transportation or death. Yet there was nothing inconsistent in these two modes of treatment. A century before, the great object of law and government had been to get and keep possession of Catholic lands and goods—and for that purpose to debase Catholics to the condition of brutes for want of education—but in 1807, the great need and absorbing passion of the Government was to crush France, and keep out French principles; and it was desirable to keep young divinity students away from Paris, where they might learn matters not expedient to be known in Ireland;—might learn, for instance, that it is not so very miserable a case for each man to be his own landlord; that country people can be pretty comfortable even without paying tithes; that people of all religions, in France, are equal before the law; that the French are not a race of creatures altogether abandoned to crime, debauchery, and atheism, for want of noble landlords; and many other things of this nature. Therefore, when the Government at one time drove young Irishmen abroad for education, and at another time induced them to stay at home for education, it knew very well each time what it was doing, and acted in both cases upon the invariable principle that all Irish life, activity, and industry, physical and intellectual, lay and clerical, belong to England, and are to be regulated and disposed of, displaced, transferred, encouraged, and prohibited, as British policy and interest shall from time to time require.

Upon the very same invariable principle, the Government in this session introduced what was called the "Catholic Officers' Bill," to enable Catholics to hold commissions in the army or navy. This measure was intended by Ministers for two purposes: first, to stop, by a small concession, the threatening agitation of the Catholics for their complete relief; and secondly, by commissioning some Catholic officers, to make the British service more popular with the people, and thus promote enlistment. On this latter point, the words of

College, having met in Dublin on business concerning it in January, 1807, availed themselves of the occasion to express their disapprobation of the invitation from Paris, in a letter to the Rev. Doctor Crotty, Rector of the Irish College at Lisbon, a copy of which was sent to Mr. Secretary Elliot, and also to Lord Howick.



Lord Howick, who introduced the bill, are worth preserving:—

“On the commonalty of Ireland the measure must have a powerful effect, by affording a *salutary check to the increasing superabundant population* of that country; as it would induce numbers to enter into the service of His Majesty, even of those who, by their own discontents, and by the artifices of others, had so lately been urged into insurrection and rebellion.”

It is needless to say that this measure also was resisted by the model Protestant, Perceval. “He greatly feared,” he said, “that this was but the beginning of a system which would, in its consequences, when fully disclosed, be highly dangerous to the Constitution and Protestant establishment. He perceived that, step by step, and from day to day, they were bringing forward measures, which he thought must end in the TOTAL REPEAL OF THE TEST ACT.” Mr. Perceval was himself, he declared, “as great a friend to toleration as any man,” but he could not see how the Constitution in Church and State was to stand, if persons were allowed to command the King’s troops who believed in seven sacraments. The bill was read a first time; and immediately arose a violent ferment, both in England and amongst the “Ascendancy” in Ireland. The University of Oxford petitioned against the measure; so did the Corporation of Dublin. The Dukes of York and Cumberland, Lord Eldon and Lord Hawkesbury, had frequent access to the King, whose mental disorder was then, indeed, so much aggravated, that he had need of advisers, if those advisers had been honest. George III. was at that time an idiot—sometimes a helpless and moping idiot, sometimes a talking and busy idiot; and, unfortunately, he was in the latter species of paroxysm. Mr. Perceval advertised in the public papers that “the Church was in danger;” and a great cry of “No-Popery!” arose over all England. The events that followed are clearly set forth in the explanations given by Lord Grenville and Lord Howick in the two Houses, of the causes which led to the sudden change of Ministry. It appears that the Ministers had had several interviews with the King, who seemed at first satisfied with their statements of the expediency of the measure proposed; but the unhappy patient had evidently not understood their statements. He asked Lord Howick one day, “What was going on in the House of Commons?” On being told that the Catholic Officers’ Bill was to come on, he expressed his general dislike.

“The next day (said Lord Howick) His Majesty, in the same gracious manner that we have been accustomed to experience from him, informed us that he must look out for new servants. Two days afterwards, I was authorized to state this circumstance to the House, and on Tuesday last His Majesty signified his pleasure that we should resign our offices next day.” Ministers then proposed to drop the bill altogether; but this was not enough for the King, in the condition of nervous irritation to which he had been worked up by Lord Eldon, and their Royal Highnesses his two sons, the Dukes of York and Cumberland. He required from them a pledge that they would never more bring forward any measure whatever respecting Papists—in other words, would never advise His Majesty to do any act of justice towards one-fourth part of his subjects. This was too much. The Ministers had no idea of *emancipating* the Catholics; it was to stave off that question of emancipation that they had proposed the trifling concession in question; but to give such a pledge as he required (a pledge which *had*, however, been given him by Mr. Pitt), would have been contrary to their duty as Ministers of State, and to their oath as Privy-Councillors, who swear “faithfully and truly to declare their mind and opinion, according to their hearts and consciences, in all things to be moved, treated, and debated in council.” Before the resignation, however, several debates took place. In one of these, Mr. Plunket, making his first speech in an united Parliament, brought under the notice of the House the singular proceedings of the Duke of Cumberland. He said:—

“Not satisfied with their placards, &c., an attempt has been made by the Chancellor of the University of Dublin (the Duke of Cumberland) to disturb the peace of that University, by endeavouring to procure a petition against the Catholic bill. Finding (to the honour of that learned body) the first application unsuccessful, a second had been sent, in which it was intimated, that the only way to preserve the favour of the royal Duke was by signing such a petition. He was not aware whether the latter application took place after the measure had been abandoned in Parliament or before. If after, it was a political scheme to support the new administration; if while the bill was pending, it was an unconstitutional and unwarrantable interference.”

The matter ended with the resignation of Ministers, and the installation of the famous “No-Popery” Cabinet, with the



pious Perceval at its head as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Castlereagh, who had become indispensable to the councils of his sovereign, was Secretary for the Colonies and the War Department; Lord Camden was President of the Privy-Council; and George Canning, Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Lord Eldon was Lord Chancellor of England; the Duke of Richmond, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and the Chief Secretary of that country was to be the victor of Assaye, and conqueror of the Mahrattas, who had just returned after his brilliant campaign in India. The Baron Sutton was created Lord Manners, and appointed Chancellor of Ireland.

The occasion or pretext for this change of Ministry was so absurd, and gave such an impression of craziness, that many members of both Houses of Parliament were unwilling to resign themselves and the country to be governed by the fitful caprices of an idiot; and several efforts were made by offering resolutions against the principle of the required *pledge* to keep Ministers in their places. Of the Parliamentary debates on these resolutions, it is only material in this place to notice such passages as throw any light on Irish affairs. Mr. Tighe, an Irish member, said the tranquillity of Ireland would, he feared, be affected by the removal of the Duke of Bedford. He did not, however, see any ground for apprehending any alarming disturbance, because the people of Ireland had been accustomed to view with cold, determined apathy all changes in administration here, as none of those changes were attended with any benefit to them. Few recruits were to be had in the South, or in the West, because there was no security for the free exercise of religion. Some years ago, a gentleman had got some men in his neighbourhood, upon his own pledge, and the pledge of a magistrate, that they should always be allowed the free exercise of their religion; but when they arrived at their quarters in the Isle of Wight, they were compelled to attend the Protestant worship, and forbidden ever to attend a neighbouring chapel of their own, under pain of military punishment. Consequently, the recruiting proceeded but slowly in Ireland, though the country was poor, and the bounties offered extravagantly high. Since the Union, Ireland had felt no community of rights, no community of commerce; the only community it felt was that of having one hundred assessors in the British Parliament, who were to give *ineffectual votes for the interest of their country, as he might do that night.*

Mr. Tighe's estimate of the value of Irish representation at Westminster remains true at this day.

Sir John Newport (as he and his friends were going out, and were not to be responsible for pledges) showed in his speech a sacred regard for "pledges." He said: "Ireland would force itself upon the consideration of the House and of the empire, of which it was a vital part; it was in vain to overlook the wants and interests, the expectations and the rights of Ireland; it was in vain to trifle with the pledges given; Ireland must have its weight, for it must be felt that the common enemy could not be resisted without Ireland. The pledge, given under the authority of the noble lord opposite, could not be evaded, though the noble lord may not act as it required him. The noble duke at the head of the present government had given a still stronger pledge. He had written two letters to two officers of the Irish Brigades, inviting them to enter into the service of this country, on the promise of making the Irish Act of 1793 general, and further, of opening the whole military career to them."

In Ireland, these Ministerial changes caused a great commotion among the Catholics. Their committee had drawn up their petition for complete Emancipation, and had sent it to Mr. Grattan for presentation. He had consulted with the friends of their cause in London, particularly with Sheridan, and wrote to the committee that they had better withhold it. A Catholic meeting was then held, at which the venerable John Keogh moved the postponement—not abandonment—of further proceedings upon their petition. As to the paltry measure of conciliation which had been proposed by Government, and which the Catholics had not petitioned for at all, Mr. Keogh thus truly described it: "The English Ministers resolved to encourage our Catholic gentlemen to enter into the army and navy, and through their influence to induce our peasantry to enter the service in great numbers. One of their objects they admit to be *to lessen our population*, and, on the whole, to change disorder and weakness into subordination and strength. But candour must compel us to allow that this bill would not have given them any great claim for gratitude from the Catholics; *to relieve them was not the object of the bill*; it did not profess to admit them to the privileges of their country. It has been called a boon to the Catholics; but, in truth, had it been carried into effect, it would have been a boon given by the Catholics, the boon of their blood, to defend a consti-



tion from which they, and they only, were cautiously excluded."

Yet Mr. Keogh praised warmly the Ministry who had attempted to grant even this "boon;" and proposed that, from respect to them, and in deference to the advice of Mr. Grattan and other friends, their petition for Emancipation should not then be presented. This motion was opposed by Mr. O'Gorman, but sustained by the potent voice of Daniel O'Connell, who spoke on this occasion with a warm and filial regard of the veteran Catholic agitator, John Keogh, and his long services to the cause. The resolution to postpone was carried; the committee was dissolved; and Lord Fingal was deputed to present a respectful address to the Duke of Bedford; although how His Grace merited any confidence or gratitude from the Irish Catholics it would now be difficult to explain. The whole policy of his administration had been directed to keep back their claim for Emancipation, and to preserve the Orange Ascendancy in its oppressive domination.

Yet the Duke *seemed* to be removed from office upon a question which touched the Catholics, though ever so little. The Orangemen were excited against him; party spirit had been roused; and such zealous partizans are the Irish populace, and so grateful for any presumed kind intention, that the Dublin mob absolutely took out the horses from the Duke's carriage and from the Duchess's carriage, yoked some of themselves to the carriages, and drew them to the water side, where they embarked for England on the 21st of April, 1807.

## CHAPTER XIV.

1807—1808.

Duke of Richmond Viceroy—Sir A. Wellesley, Secretary—Their System—Depression of Catholics—Insolence of Orangemen—Government Interference in Elections—Ireland gets a New Insurrection Act—And an Arms Act—Grattan Advocates Coercion Acts—Sheridan Opposes them—Acts Passed—The Bishop of Quimper—Means used to Create Exasperation Against Catholics—"Shanavests" and "Caravats"—"Church in Danger"—Catholic Petition—Influence of O'Connell—Lord Fingal—Growing Liberality amongst Protestants—Maynooth Grant Curtailed—Doctor Duigenan Privy Councillor—Catholic Petition Presented—The "*Veto*" Offered—Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan—They Urge the *Veto* as a Security—Petition Rejected—Controversies on the *Veto*—Bishops' Resolutions—No Catholics in Bank of Ireland—Dublin Police.

THE Duke of Richmond had arrived in Dublin, as Lord-Lieutenant, a few days before his predecessor left it.

As the new administration had accepted office immediately after the King had required a pledge from his Ministers that no Catholic claims or rights or wrongs should *ever* be mentioned to him again, this acceptance of office was itself a pledge to that effect by the new advisers of the Crown; and, so far as they were concerned, they certainly redeemed the pledge. They were professedly a "No-Popery" Cabinet; and the first principle of their policy was resistance to all reform, and especially to all concession to Catholics. Such being their merits, the Viceroy and his Secretary, Sir Arthur Wellesley, were at once presented by the Dublin Corporation with the freedom of the city in a gold and in a silver box respectively. The vote was accompanied by an enthusiastic speech of the notorious Mr. John Giffard, who said, this was not the mere compliment of custom, but a special recognition of their known determination "to maintain the Constitution in Church and State"—that is, the Protestant Ascendancy, and the exclusion and debasement of Catholics.

It may well be understood that this event aggravated the insolence of Orange magistrates and squires all over the island, making the lot of the Catholic country people still more bitter than before; and that it caused despondency, irritation, and some degree of disorganization amongst the Catholic leaders, who were striving in such hopeless circumstances for the civil rights of their countrymen. It would be difficult to conceive any political prospect more gloomy than that of the Catholic body at that moment; dreading the rigour of the new administration, with its ferocious Orange supporters, and reduced to be thankful to the outgoing Ministers for attempting a paltry army reform, avowedly intended to diminish the Catholic population. This is the first time—seven years after the Union—that we first find British Ministers urging the depopulation of the island; a policy which has since been prosecuted with such eminent success.

The new Parliament opened in June. In the elections which preceded it the Government made unusual exertions to secure a large majority. Of the nature of the influences employed in Ireland for this purpose one example may suffice. Soon after the House met, Mr. Whitbread stated, from a paper which he produced to the House, that Mr. Ormsby, the Solicitor for the Forfeited Estates in Ireland, went down to the election for Wexford County, and personally waited on Mr. James Grogan, for the purpose of influencing him



to support the Ministerial candidates, by a promise of a restoration to the family of all the estates of his late brother, Cornelius Grogan, which had been forfeited. Ministers neither denied nor blamed, nor offered to investigate the fact, or punish the delinquent. Mr. Perceval assured Lord Howick that he had never before heard of it; and Sir Arthur Wellesley declared that the Government of Ireland had given *no instructions* to Mr. Ormsby on the subject; and any improper use of such influence was unknown to Government. The actual abuse of the Government influence, the overt negotiation of their confidential servant, and his subsequent impunity, tell the whole story plainly enough.

The first Act passed for Ireland in this Parliament was a new "Insurrection Act." The second was an "Arms Act." They were brought in by Sir Arthur Wellesley; and it appeared on the debates that they had been actually framed by the late Grenville administration, but there had not been time to pass them. The Duke of Bedford and Mr. Secretary Elliott had recommended, and now supported them—yet the Dublin people had harnessed themselves to Lord Bedford's carriage! So easily won, by even pretended kindness, are our generous hearted countrymen; and so minute is the difference between Whigs and Tories!

The "Insurrection Act" renewed the power of the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim disturbed counties, and the authority of the magistrates to arrest persons who should be found out of their dwellings between sunset and sunrise. There was a clause enacting "that magistrates might have the power to enter any houses, *or authorize any persons*, by warrant, to do so, at any time from ——— after sunset to sunrise, from which they should suspect the inhabitants, or any of them, to be then absent, and cause absent persons to be apprehended, and deemed idle and disorderly, unless they could prove they were absent upon their lawful occupations."

Many persons thought it singular to find Mr. Grattan, then member for Dublin, supporting this coercion law; but, in truth, it was quite consistent with his former course; he had supported the former Insurrection Act, and Gunpowder Act, in the Irish Parliament. Nobody could have a greater horror of revolutionary movements, and of French principles, than Grattan; and Mr. Elliott, the late Secretary, assured him that the poor "Threshers" were at bottom no other than *Jacobins*. He said on this occasion:—

"He understood from his Right Hon-

ourable friend beside him (Mr. Elliott) *that there were secret meetings of a dark and dangerous description in Ireland.* This formed a ground for the bill. He was afraid of a French interest in Ireland, and he wished that Government should be furnished with the means, not merely of resisting, but of extirpating that interest, wherever and whenever it should appear."

But his support of so cruel a measure greatly alienated his friends in Ireland. To do him justice, he vehemently objected to the clause authorizing magistrates to enter houses by night, on suspicion, or to give a warrant for that purpose to *any one* who might say he had a suspicion. "But who," he exclaimed, "were the persons to be vested with the power? Perhaps some lawless miscreant—some vagabond. Perhaps the discretion of that reasonable time was to be lodged in the bosom of some convenient menial, some postilion, coachman, ostler, or ploughboy, who, under the sanction of the law, was to judge when it would be a reasonable time for him to rush into the apartment of a female, while she was hastily throwing on her clothes, to open the door to this midnight visitor. This would give a wound that would be felt long."

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, to his honour be it said, went against his friend and most of his party upon this question. "His Right Honourable friend had said that the measure could only be justified by an imperious necessity. Now, it was that necessity which he wished to have clearly made out to exist, before the measure was resorted to. It was no answer to him that the measure had been prepared by his friends. If it had, the Threshers were then engaged in their disturbances, and administering unlawful oaths. Ireland was now as loyally tranquil as any part of the empire. Would they state in the preamble of the bill, 'Whereas a very small part of Ireland was some time ago disturbed by the Threshers, and whereas that disturbance has been completely put down by the ordinary course of the law, and Ireland is now completely tranquil, be it therefore enacted, &c., That most extraordinary powers, &c.'?"

The bill passed into law, however, with all its clauses; and by continual renewals (for it is always *temporary*, like the Mutiny Act), it has been substantially the law of Ireland even to this day.

Next came the Arms Bill. It was the needful complement of the other; for if the people were not very carefully deprived of arms, it was known that they would



not submit to the daily and nightly outrages which were intended to be perpetrated upon them under the "Insurrection Act." But while the latter was to be contingent upon the Viceroy's proclamation, the Arms Act was universal, and was to operate at once.

Mr. Sheridan opposed this measure also. He said that if the former bill seemed odious in its form and substance, this was ten thousand times more so; it was really abominable. But at the same time, as if it were meant to make the measure both odious and ridiculous, it was so constructed as that it would plunder the people of their arms, and put down the trade of a blacksmith. Nothing like a blacksmith was to exist in Ireland, lest he might possibly form something like a pike. If ever there was an instance in which the liberties of a loyal people were taken from them, and they were thereby tempted to become disloyal, it was the present. Indeed, from the general spirit in which the bill was framed, he thought there only wanted a clause to make it high treason for any man to communicate either of these bills to Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French, lest he should conceive them to be direct invitations to him to visit that part of His Majesty's empire.

On the 14th of August, Mr. Sheridan moved for a serious Parliamentary inquiry into the state of Ireland. Mr. Perceval eagerly opposed the motion; earnestly deprecated "the *time* and the *spirit*" of Mr. Sheridan's motion; and got rid of it by the "previous question."

Thus, at the moment when Catholics were told to despair of ever being admitted to the privileges of the Constitution, they were to be disarmed and coerced on suspicion and hearsay; and all inquiry into the causes of their discontent was refused, because the right time had not come. And, in fact, it has never come. We have said the *Catholics* were to be disarmed and coerced; for although no religious distinction is made in the Acts, yet every one knew then, as now, that such laws are never enforced against a Protestant, unless it be, perhaps, some Protestant like Mr. Wilson, the Tyrone magistrate, who makes himself obnoxious by standing up for his Catholic neighbours.

The stern and eternal negative put upon Catholic claims soon reached France. A certain Bishop of Quimper, in a pastoral to his flock, very naturally drew a striking contrast between the intolerance of England and the regard for religion and absolute toleration shown by the Em-

peror's Government.\* These remarks were, in the eyes of the English Government, a development of the most infamous French principles, or rather a proof of a Franco-Irish conspiracy. Indeed, nothing ever has so bitterly provoked the British public and its Government, as when the eloquent tongue of some illustrious French prelate proclaims aloud the shocking truth about Irish rule, and pours forth the hot torrent of sacred indignation upon the deliberate, cold-blooded atrocities of England.†

Upon the slender foundation of the Bishop of Quimper's pastoral, Government underlings engrafted a most base fabrication, for the double purpose of raising indignation against the French, and of throwing *odium* upon the body of the Irish Catholics. The Government prints gave out that a very important document, pregnant with danger to this country, signed by Napoleon and Talleyrand, had fallen into the hands of his Majesty's Ministers, together with a document of still more importance to the Catholic cause in Ireland, asserted to have been

\* The good Bishop of Quimper says, amongst other things: "He (the Emperor) shall hear the acclamations of your gratitude and your love. They will prove to the eternal enemy of the glory and prosperity of France that all her perfidious intrigues will never be able to alienate from him your religious and faithful hearts. For a moment she had seduced you—at that unhappy epoch when anarchy ravaged this desolated land, and when its impious furies overturned your temples and profaned your altars. She only affected concern for the re-establishment of your holy religion in order to rend and ravage your country. See the sufferings which England inflicts upon Ireland, which is Catholic like you, and subject to her dominion! The three last ages present only the affecting picture of a people robbed of all their religious and civil rights. In vain the most enlightened men of that nation have protested against the tyrannical oppression. A new persecution has ravished from them even the hope of seeing an end to their calamities. An inflamed and misled (the English) people dares applaud such injustice. It insults with sectarian fanaticism the Catholic religion, and its venerable chief; and it is that Government, which knows not how to be just towards its own subjects, and dares to calumniate this, which has given us security and honour. Whilst the Irish Catholics groan beneath laws so oppressive, our august Emperor does not confine himself to the protection and establishment of that religion in his own states. He demanded, in his treaty with Saxony, that it should there enjoy the same liberty as other modes of worship."

† It is but a very few years since Monsieur Dupanloup, the eloquent Bishop of Orleans, having given out that he was about to preach a charity sermon for the relief of the exterminated Irish, Lord Plunket, Bishop of Tuam, wrote to Monsieur d'Orleans that he knew he was going to libel *him*, and sling foul slanders upon him. Efforts were even made through the English Embassy to induce the Emperor to forbid the sermon. It was preached, however, to a vast assemblage, and though his grace of Tuam was not slandered nor named in the discourse, yet it was a most scathing and touching *exposé* of the whole course of British policy in Ireland. The English press was bitterly indignant.



solemnly issued from the Vatican. It was falsely asserted that the Pope had lately issued a bull, addressed to the titular bishops of Ireland, exhorting them in the most forcible terms to excite in the minds of all people of the Roman Catholic persuasion under their influence and direction, an ardent devotion to the views and objects of Buonaparte, and an expectation that by his assistance and protection they might eventually obtain an uncontrolled exercise of their rights, religious and political. It was also stated that this address from the Roman Pontiff was accompanied by another paper, containing a solemn declaration on the part of the French ruler, that it was his firm determination to give the Roman Catholic religion the ascendancy in Ireland.

By foul means such as these the "No-Popery" cry was stimulated to its most savage pitch of bloodthirsty ferocity. Even the rural organizations, calling themselves "Shanavests" and "Caravats," which arose this year in Tipperary, and who were nothing in the world but White Boys and Threshers, under local names, were carefully given out to be secret political societies, which were going to bring in the French. In truth, those unhappy people had their thoughts much more occupied about the tithe-proctor than about the Emperor Napoléon; and knew more about county-cess than about French principles. Unfortunately, however, the Shanavests and Caravats were not one agrarian faction, but two; and sometimes, when they ought to have been threshing the tithe-corn, they threshed each other at fair and market. Mr. Plowden says:—

"Both parties seemed to be indiscriminately sore at the payment of tithes; both complained of the exorbitancy of the advanced demands of rack-rents for lands out of lease. Both manifested symptoms of a natural and interested attachment to the soil they had occupied, by their undisguised hostility to every competitor for the farms of the old occupiers. They had not then begun (as they were afterwards charged) to fix a general rate of tithe and rent, and to enforce the observance of it by threats of visiting those who should dare to exceed it. They assumed no appellation expressive of, or appropriate to, any of those objects which they have since pursued to the disgrace and disturbance of the country. When the Insurrection and Arms bills passed into law, it is no less true than singular that in all the counties then said to be disturbed, *not a single charge* was to be found on the calendar of sedition or insurgency at the preceding

assizes. Widely as the Threshers had extended their outrages, they had been completely put down and tranquillized by the arm of the common law, without recourse to the violent measure of suspending the Constitution. The objects of their outrages had been ascertained by the judges who had gone into the disturbed parts on the late special commission; and not even a spurious whisper had reached their ears that there was amongst them anything describable as an *existing French party*."

These miserable writhings of a crushed peasantry under the heel of local tyrants, were, however, eagerly seized and dwelt upon, as both justifying the coercion bills, and exhibiting the unchangeable, ineradicable wickedness of Papists; so that when Parliament met, on the 21st of January, 1808, *No Popery!* and *Church in Danger!* rung fiercely through the three kingdoms.

Two days before Parliament assembled, there was a large meeting of Catholics in Dublin, Lord Fingal in the chair. On motion of Count Dalton, it was resolved to petition Parliament for the repeal of the remaining Penal laws. Some gentlemen, as Mr. O'Connor, of Belanagare, moved an adjournment of the meeting, as they despaired of any success under the existing *regime*; but O'Connell, who now constantly attended these meetings, and took a leading part in them, had already adopted his well-known maxim—*Agitate! agitate!* He supported the resolution to petition; so did John Byrne, of Mullinahack. The resolution of adjournment was withdrawn, and that for a petition unanimously passed. O'Connell's influence was, even thus early, very powerful in softening down irritation, soothing jealousies, and inspiring self-abnegation for the sake of the common cause. It was this great quality, not less than his commanding ability, which made him soon afterwards the acknowledged head of the Catholic cause.

The petition was intrusted to Lord Fingal, who went to London and asked Lord Grenville and Mr. Grattan to present it, after the Duke of Portland, to whom it was first offered, had coldly refused to have anything to do with it. And humiliating enough it must have been to that peer of ancient race to be obliged to hawk round among "Liberal" members of both Houses the humble petition of himself and his countrymen to be admitted to the common civil rights of human beings, and to see the representative of one of King William's Dutchmen turn his back upon the importunity of the Irish Papist.



Nothing came of this petition. It was laid on the table of the Lords; but when Mr. Grattan offered it in the Commons, the sharp eyes of Canning and Perceval detected an informality—several of the names appeared to be written in the same handwriting—a fatal objection, as they insisted, and the petition was not received. Evidently the right way had not yet been discovered to command the attention of that House to Catholic claims; and it was not till twenty-one years later that the right way was suddenly found out by O'Connell.

It is agreeable to have here to record that the furious bigotry of the Ministry, and the studied excitations to religious animosity, were not responded to by the Irish Protestants altogether as had been expected. The Duke of Cumberland had entirely failed to induce or intimidate the University of Dublin into petitioning against the Catholic claims, as Oxford had done. The Protestant inhabitants of many of the counties in Ireland presented petitions in favour of the claims of the Catholics. There were nine counties that had shown the noble example of liberality and sound policy. The Counties of Clare and Galway had, at meetings convened by the sheriff, expressed their ardent wish for admitting their Catholic brethren to the benefits of the Constitution. In the Counties of Tipperary, Kilkenny, Roscommon, Waterford, and Meath, and in the town of Newry, resolutions to the same effect were entered into, as well by the Protestant gentry and inhabitants as by the great bulk of Protestant proprietors of land. That recommendation was owing partly to the growing influence of liberality and confidence, partly to the absence of all suspicion of any real intention to invade the landed property of the county on a convenient occasion; but more particularly to the strong and immediate feeling of danger which a divided country would have to encounter in case of hostile invasion. On that principle did wise Protestants deprecate the terrible privilege of an exclusive monopoly of Constitutional right and political power.

The Duke of Cumberland, indeed, had the gratification of presenting to the House of Lords one petition from the Orange Corporation of Dublin against the Catholics; but the example was not generally followed. One reflection arises upon these facts:—That the most potent and unrelenting enemy to the Irish Catholics, *at all times*, was not the Irish Protestants, but the British imperial system. It was the English Parliament, in King William's time, then assuming to bind Ireland by its

own acts, which first violated the Treaty of Limerick, by excluding Catholic Peers and Commoners from Parliament. It was while the English Parliament completely controlled the action of that of Ireland (by requiring the heads of bills to be sent over), that the dreadful Penal Code was successively elaborated and maintained in force. But it was Ireland's *free* Parliament which, in 1793, gave the grand shock to that infamous code, admitting Catholics to the bar, to the corporations, to the juries, allowing them to go to school, and to teach school, to bear arms, to own horses, to hold lands in fee, to take degrees in the university;—in short, it was the Irish Protestant Parliament, once free, that swept away in one day five-sixths of the oppressions, penalties, and disabilities accumulated and piled upon the Catholics during a whole century, by the unappeasable hate of England.

This accounts for O'Connell's frequent declaration that, rather than remain in the Union, he would gladly take back the Irish Protestant Parliament, consent to repeal of Catholic Emancipation, and take his chance with his Irish fellow-countrymen. And O'Connell was right.

Two of the first things recommended for Ireland by the Duke of Richmond were, the curtailment of the Maynooth Grant, and the appointment of Doctor Duigenan to a seat on the Irish Privy-Council. The whole spirit of the Perceval administration is apparent in these two examples. Doctor Duigenan had devoted his life to raking up all the vile, forgotten slanders that had ever been heaped upon Catholics since the days of Calvin; and was never so much in his element as when pouring forth his foul collection by the hour in a full-foaming stream of ribald abuse. The appointment of such a man to such a place was a public affront and a significant warning to Catholics, showing them in what estimation they and their claims were held by the new Government.

The other pitiful manifestation of No-Popery spite was cutting down the appropriation for Maynooth College. This was evidently a subject of difference and discussion in the Cabinet. Mr. Foster, Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, in Committee on the Supplies, stated that additional buildings were in progress at Maynooth; that the establishment was capable of accommodating two hundred and fifty students; and that it was his intention to move that the sum of £9,250 should be granted to that Institution for the current year. Sir John Newport moved that it should be £13,000, which was the annual grant fixed by the late



administration, as will be remembered, in their alarm lest the Irish College of Paris should again attract Irish pupils. A warm debate ensued. Mr. Perceval, as a matter of course, opposed the larger grant upon strictly evangelical principles; so did William Wilberforce (a gentleman whose sympathies were strongly excited by the degradation of oppressed people, provided they were of a black colour). General Mathew, a good and generous Irishman, earnestly supported the proposal to grant the larger sum.

He had been, within the last ten days, at Maynooth, and he could assure the House that, unless the whole of the last year's grant should be voted, the buildings upon which former grants had been expended would fall. There was no lead on the roofs, and the rain penetrated through them. He alluded to the offer made by order of Napoleon, to induce Irish students to go for education to France from Lisbon and Ireland, upon a promise of the restoration of all the Irish *Bourses*; and read an extract from the answer of the Irish Catholic bishops, stating their gratitude to the Government for the liberal support of Maynooth, and denouncing suspension against any functionaries, and exclusion from preferment in Ireland against any students, who should accept the offers of the enemy of their own country. Would any one say after that that the Catholics were not to be confided in? If they were not to be trusted, why not dismiss them from the army and navy? Why allow them to vote at elections?

But this was not the act of Ministers. He was sorry to be obliged to allude to the conduct of any of the Royal family. But, however, it was rumoured that even Ministers were disposed to agree to the grant, till they went to St. James's Palace, and were closeted for several hours with a royal Duke, after which they resorted to the present reduction. That royal Duke was the Chancellor of the University of Dublin; he was Chancellor of a Protestant school, and might wish to put down the education of the Catholics: but no man who knew or valued Ireland as he did himself, could countenance such a project.

Ministers, however, had a sure majority, and succeeded in cutting down the proposed grant to Maynooth. One can only wonder that the Catholic body, clergy and laity, persisted in such an obstinate "loyalty" to the British Government, and did not turn to France, and hearken to the liberal invitation of the Emperor Napoleon.

Amongst the bitter opponents of the Maynooth Grant was Dr. Duigenan, the new Privy-Councillor, who was member for an Irish borough. He vented some of the venom, of which he had plenty, upon his Catholic countrymen; said they were always traitors in theory, and wanted but the opportunity to be traitors in action. This gave rise to some sharp debating.

Mr. Barham could not contain his execration of such scandalous and wicked sentiments. This drew from Mr. Tierney the question to Mr. Perceval, Whether the official order for making Doctor Duigenan a Privy-Councillor had been sent over to Ireland? On a negative answer from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir A. Wellesley apprised the House that the Right Honourable and learned gentleman had been specially recommended by the Lord-Lieutenant to be a Privy-Councillor, as from his knowledge of ecclesiastical business he could be of great service in Ireland in that situation. This induced Mr. Barham on a subsequent day to move the House, That a humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying that he would order to be laid before the House copies of the extracts of the correspondence which passed between the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and the Government of England, as to the appointment of Doctor Patrick Duigenan to a seat in the Privy-Council of Ireland. The question being put, Mr. W. Wynne said he was anxious to hear a vindication of so extraordinary an appointment, and one which was so much lamented. He then alluded to the dismissal and subsequent advancement of Mr. Giffard, and considered the present only as a fresh endeavour to irritate the feelings of the Catholics of Ireland. Sir A. Wellesley repeated that applications had been made to Government here to grant to the learned Doctor, as Judge of the Prerogative Court, the office of member of the Privy-Council. Till the time of his predecessor this had been the uniform custom, and it was now resorted to again as a matter of convenience. He believed that the present session was the first time it had been attempted to be argued, that because a man was friendly to the Church he ought not to be trusted. If the honourable and learned Doctor had been indiscreet in his language, why was it not taken down at that time, and complaint made to that House? *He did not care of what religion a man was.* If he could be useful in any line, in that line, he was of opinion, he ought to be employed.



There is no doubt that Sir Arthur Wellesley was quite sincere in these declarations. He did not care of what religion a man was; he was always a practical person; he desired, in a privy-councillor, as in a staff-officer or a commissary, precisely such qualities as were serviceable for the business in hand; and as the business in hand at that moment was to trample down and humiliate the Catholics, he approved of Dr. Duigenan for Privy-Councillor.

The Catholic petition, which had been rejected by the House of Commons on a point of form, had been sent back to Ireland to be signed anew. In the meantime Lord Fingal remained in London, and had frequent interviews with the friends of the Catholics, particularly with Mr. Ponsonby. It was now that the delicate subject of the *veto* first took a tangible shape. Lord Fingal was an amiable, high-minded, and unsuspicious man; but a weak one. The success of the petition, he was assured by the friends of the Catholic cause, would be greatly forwarded by an admission of the royal *veto* in the nomination of the Irish prelacy. This negotiation, which has since produced effects of great national importance, though then unforeseen, was of a private nature; and the particulars of it would not have reached the public had not subsequent events induced the parties to it to make them public. Never was a point of *politico-theological* controversy so fiercely contested, and, consequently, so misconceived and misrepresented, as this question of *veto*. Lord Fingal had certainly received no specific instruction concerning it from the Catholic meeting, which voted him the sole delegate, guardian, and manager of their petition; and the subject of a *veto* was not in contemplation at that meeting.

The history of this affair proves, in a most striking manner, how dangerous it is for any national Church, in matters affecting its discipline, government, and independence, to take counsel of any one outside of itself. In the present case Lord Fingal, only anxious for the emancipation of his countrymen, and credulous enough to believe that the English Parliament would grant it upon fair terms, without the strongest coercion, acted by the advice of Doctor Milner, an English Vicar-Apostolic, and author of a learned controversial work; and as Doctor Milner was a kind of agent in England for the Irish bishops, though not with any such purpose as this, the two together took it upon them to authorize Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan (as both those gentlemen

affirmed) to reinforce the prayer of the Catholic petition by offering the *veto* power to the Crown.

The petition having returned from Ireland duly signed, was presented by Mr. Grattan on the 25th of May. The only remarkable passage in his speech is that in which he proposes the *veto*. He said:—

“The influence of the Pope, so far, was purely spiritual, and did not extend even to the appointment of the members of his Catholic hierarchy. They nominated themselves, and looked to the Pope but for his spiritual sanction of such nomination. But if it should be supposed that there was the smallest danger in this course, he had a proposition to suggest, which he had authority to state, which indeed he was instructed to make—namely, that His Majesty may interfere upon any such occasion with his negative. This would have the effect of preventing any Catholic ecclesiastic being advanced to the government of that Church in Ireland, who was not politically approved of by the Government of that country.”

Mr. Ponsonby, in supporting the petition, made the same proposal; and said he did so upon the authority of Doctor Milner, who was a Catholic bishop in England, and who was authorized by the Catholic bishops of Ireland to make the proposition, in case the measure of Catholic Emancipation should be acceded to. The proposition, he said, was this: That the person to be nominated to a vacant bishopric should be submitted to the King's approbation; and that, if the approbation were refused, another person should be proposed, and so on, in succession, until His Majesty's approbation should be obtained, so that the appointment should finally rest with the King.

Mr. Perceval, as might have been expected, earnestly and prayerfully opposed Mr. Grattan's motion, and all other possible concession to Papists, whether on the condition of *veto* or any other condition. Not that he would be averse, he said, from giving contentment to his Catholic brethren, whom he loved, as a Christian, as much as any man; and “should not conceive himself precluded from supporting their claims under different circumstances, in the event, for instance, of a change taking place in the Catholic religion itself.” On the division upon Mr. Grattan's motion, the Minister had a majority of one hundred and fifty-three—one hundred and twenty-eight having voted for going into committee, and two hundred and eighty-one against it.

Lord Grenville presented the same peti-



tion in the Lords, made the same offer of the *veto*, and the petition met the same fate as in the Commons.

These debates at once raised an immense controversy, both in England and in Ireland, which lasted many years; and produced innumerable books and pamphlets, discussing the limits between spiritual and temporal power, the meaning of loyalty, and of the oath of supremacy, and the "liberties of the Gallican Church"—which ought rather to be termed the "Slavery of the Gallican Church," because it means the subordination of the government of that Church to the civil power. *That* civil power, indeed, is native and not foreign; but when it comes to be a question of subordinating the government of the Catholic Church in Ireland to a Protestant King of England, one must only wonder that even the eagerness for civil emancipation could ever have made any Irish Catholic entertain such an idea for a moment. Into the merits of the question we do not here enter; but it is matter of history that when Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh were intriguing for support to the Union, in 1799, they had deluded certain Irish bishops into accepting the principle of the *veto*, by holding out to them the bait of immediate Emancipation after the Union.\*

\* The Rev. Mr. Brennan, in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, narrates the circumstances thus:—

"During the course of that year, ten of the Irish bishops, constituting the Board of Maynooth College, happened to be convened in Dublin, on the arrangement of some ecclesiastical business, when Lord Castlereagh, then Secretary for Ireland, availed himself of their presence, and submitted for their adoption two vitally momentous measures, originating from the British Ministry.†

"By the first of these it was proposed, that His Majesty should be invested with the power of a *veto* in all future ecclesiastical promotions within this kingdom; and agreeably to the second, the Catholic clergy of Ireland were to receive a pension out of the treasury; at the same time, assurances were solemnly pledged by Government that, on the acquiescence of the Irish hierarchy in these State measures, the fate of that great national question, Catholic Emancipation, entirely depended. Thus beset by the proffers of the Minister on the one hand, and by the alarming posture of the country on the other, the bishops already alluded to agreed, 'That in the appointment of Roman Catholic prelates to vacant sees within the kingdom, such interference of Government as may enable it to be satisfied of the loyalty of the person appointed is just, and ought to be agreed to.' This statement was accompanied with an admission, 'That a provision, through Government, for the Roman Catholic clergy of this kingdom, competent and secured, ought to be thankfully accepted.'

This transaction remained a secret for many years. Mr. Plowden speaks of "the long and mys-

The alarm and indignation excited in Ireland, both amongst clergy and laity, by the *veto* project, were quite vehement. The conscientious Catholic historian, Plowden, says:—

"The prospective view of a national religion, preserved with a virtuous hierarchy, without any *civil* establishment or State interference, through three centuries of oppression and persecution, produced alarm in every reflecting mind. The proposed innovation of introducing *Royal and Protestant* connection, influence, and power into the constitution and perpetuation of a Catholic hierarchy, to the utter exclusion of which the Irish Catholics ascribed that almost miraculous preservation, threw the public mind into unusual agitation. The laity abhorred the idea of the ministers of their religion becoming open to Court influence and intrigue, and shuddered at the prospect of prostituting the sacred function of that apostolic mission and jurisdiction, to which they had hitherto submitted as of divine institution, to its revilers, persecutors, and sworn enemies. At the same time, the whole Catholic clergy of Ireland were driven by a common electric impulse into more than ordinary reflection upon the stupendous efficacy of that evangelical purity and independence by which the spiritual pastors had so long, and under such temptations and difficulties, preserved their flocks in the religion of their Christian ancestors.

"The general voice of the people crying out against religious reform, was an awful warning to the clergy, and although the insidious concordat of 1799 was still clothed in darkness, the Irish Catholic prelates met in regular National Synod on the 14th and 15th of September, 1808, in Dublin, and came to the following resolutions:—

"It is the decided opinion of the Roman Catholic prelates of Ireland, that it is inexpedient to introduce any alteration in

terious suppression from the knowledge of the Catholic body of the resolutions of the Clerical Trustees of Maynooth College in 1799, which never came fully to light till 1810. It is not surprising," he adds, "that respectable prelates should wish to conceal them from the eyes of the public, and particularly of such of their friends as they wished to engage in their cause, and whose esteem and confidence they subsequently courted. They were the base offspring of their unguarded connection with Mr. Pitt, whilst he was meditating the Union; which they have been sorely lamenting from the hour they found themselves swindled out of the stipulated price of their seduction."

It should be stated, in justice to Doctor Milner, that, after the use of his name in Parliament, as authorizing the offer of a *veto*, he published a statement that he had no authority to sanction such an offer; and that he had been misquoted. After the Irish bishops passed their synodical resolutions, there was no more ardent opponent of the *veto* than Doctor Milner.

† The prelates composing the board were as follows:—Richard O'Reilly, R.C.A.B., Armagh; J. T. Troy, R.C.A.B., Dublin; Edward Dillon, R.C.A.B., Tuam; Thomas Bray, R.C.A.B., Cashel; P. J. Plunkett, R.C.B., Meath; F. Moylan, R.C.B., Cork; Daniel Delaney, R.C.B., Kildare; Edmund French, R.C.B., Elphin; James Caulfield, R.C.B., Ferns; John Cruise, R.C.B., Ardagh.



the canonical mode hitherto observed in the nomination of the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, which mode long experience has proved to be unexceptionable, wise, and salutary.

"That the Roman Catholic prelates pledge themselves to adhere to the rules by which they have been hitherto uniformly guided; namely, to recommend to His Holiness only such persons as are of unimpeachable loyalty and peaceable conduct." These Synodical resolutions were signed by twenty-three prelates. Three only (they were three of those who had signed the resolutions of 1799) dissented.\*

Immediately were held many meetings of Catholics throughout Ireland, who, by their resolutions and addresses, protested vehemently against the whole project of *veto*, and thanked the bishops for their firm resolutions. When the real nature of the proposal was explained and fully known, the Catholics of Ireland indignantly resolved rather to remain unemancipated than suffer their Church to be enthralled. O'Connell was a strong opponent of the *veto* from the first; the more active and educated of the laity repulsed the plan with scorn; the press teemed with pamphlets, of which none made so much impression as the republication of Burke's *Letter to a Peer* in Ireland, in which he treats of a similar project, of giving the Crown a voice in the nomination of Catholic bishops.†

The project of enslaving the Irish Cath-

\* Plowden. *Post-Union History*, p. 395, et seq.

† Edmund Burke, who was as warm a friend to his Catholic countrymen as Grattan, and a much wiser friend, says, in his *Letter to a Peer*:—"Never were the members of one religious sect fit to appoint pastors to another. Those who have no regard for their welfare, reputation, or internal quiet, will not appoint such as are proper. The Seraglio of Constantinople is as equitable as we are, whether Catholics or Protestant; and where their own sect is concerned, full as religious; but the sport which they make of the miserable dignities of the Greek Church, the factions of the Harem, to which they make them subservient, the continual sale to which they expose and re-expose the same dignity, and by which they squeeze all the inferior orders of the clergy, is nearly equal to all the other oppressions together exercised by Musselmén over the unhappy members of the Oriental Church. It is a great deal to suppose that the present Castle would nominate bishops for the Roman Church of Ireland with a religious regard for its welfare. Perhaps they cannot, perhaps dare not, do it." And in another *Letter to Doctor Hussey*, the Catholic Bishop of Waterford, he said:—"If you (the Catholic bishops) have not wisdom enough to make common cause, they will cut you off one by one. I am sure that the constant meddling of your bishops and clergy with the Castle, and the Castle with them, will infallibly set them ill with their own body. All the weight which the clergy have hitherto had to keep the people quiet will be wholly lost if this once should happen. At best you will have a marked schism, and more than one kind, and I am greatly mistaken if this is not intended, and diligently and systematically pursued."

olic Church to the English Protestant State was for that time defeated, but it was brought forward again and again during the struggle for Emancipation, and for many years greatly agitated the Catholic public.

In the course of this session Lord Grenville made his motion to make Catholic merchants admissible as Governor and Directors of the Bank of Ireland. Lord Westmoreland opposed the motion on the general ground that *no further concessions* whatever should, under the present circumstances, be granted to the Catholics. But to this not very intelligent argument his lordship added a sensible observation. He said "he was surprised to see such motions so often brought forward by those who, when they were themselves in power, employed every exertion to deprecate and prevent such discussions." This was true. Ireland and her grievances, the Catholics and their wrongs, had become, in the Imperial Parliament, a stock-in-trade for Whigs out of place, and have so remained ever since. When these politicians are in power they still "deprecate such discussions." Lord Redesdale, late Chancellor of Ireland, was alarmed at the danger to the Protestant interest which would arise from allowing Catholics to be Bank Directors. He said he had only to repeat his former objections to such claims. "The more you were ready to grant them, the more power and pretensions you gave to the Catholics to come forward with *fresh claims*, and *perhaps to insist* upon them." His lordship then launched out into a general invective against the Catholics, and particularly the priests.

This debate about the Bank of Ireland is not, by any means, worth recording (for the motion was rejected, as its mover knew it would be), save to illustrate the party tactics of the Whigs, and the cool and stupid insolence of the "Ascendancy."

The Dublin Police Bill was carried, creating eighteen new places for police magistrates; and Parliament was prorogued on the 8th of July, 1808.

## CHAPTER XV.

1808—1809.

The Duke of Richmond's Anti-Catholic Policy—The Orangemen Flourish—Their Outrages and Murders—Castlereagh and Perceval Charged with Selling Seats—Corruption—Sir Arthur Wellesley—Tithes—Catholic Committee Re-organized—John Keogh on Petitioning Parliament—O'Connell and the Convention Act—Orangemen also Re-organized—Orange Convention—More Murders by Orangemen—Crooked Policy of the Castle—Defection of the Bandon Orangemen—Success of the Castle Policy in preventing Union with Irishmen.



THE administration of the Duke of Richmond showed a venomous determination to keep down the Catholic people, and to rule the island most strictly through the Orange Ascendancy, and for its profit.

The legislative rejection of the Catholic petition had been aggravated by the restoration of a certain Mr. Jacob, a notorious Orangeman, to the magistracy, the appointment of Mr. Giffard to a more valuable situation than that from which he had been displaced, the admission of Doctor Duigenan to the Privy-Council, and the curtailed grant to Maynooth College. A fostering countenance was given to the Orangemen that tended more to foment and encourage, than to put down or punish, their atrocities.

It is certainly not an agreeable part of our duty to narrate and to dwell upon these Orange outrages, because this helps, more or less, to keep alive the religious animosities between the two religious sects, which was the very object of the English Government in encouraging those outrages. Much more pleasing would it be to draw a veil of oblivion over them, and to think of them no more. But for two reasons this cannot be: first, the modern history of Ireland would be almost a blank page without the villanies of Orange persecution, the complicity of Government in those villanies, and their consequences upon the general well-being of the island; next, because however well inclined to forget those horrors, we have not been permitted to do so for a moment down to the present day. It was as late as 1848 that Lord Clarendon secretly supplied the Orange Lodges with arms; as late as '49 that a magistrate of Down County led a band of Orangemen and policemen to the wrecking and slaughter of a Catholic townland.\* Later still, the records of assizes in the northern circuits show us the frequent picture of an Orange murderer shielded from justice by his twelve brethren, who have been carefully packed into the jury-box by a sheriff who is an officer of the Crown. All this odious condition of society being a direct product of British policy, and now flourishing and still bearing its poisonous fruit, a student of Irish history is bound to look at, and to study the wretched details.

On the evening of the 23d of June, 1808, a considerable number of men, women, and children were assembled round a bonfire at Corinshiga, within one mile and a half of the town of Newry. They had a gar-

\* It is true that the magistrate was dismissed from the Commission. He had somewhat exceeded the intentions of the Castle in getting up a "loyal demonstration." Yet the arms of that banditti had been furnished out of the Castle vaults.

land, and were amusing themselves, some dancing, others sitting at the fire, perfectly unapprehensive of danger, when, in the midst of their mirth, eighteen yeomen, fully armed and accoutred, approached the place, where they were drawn up by their sergeant, who gave them the word of command to "present and fire," which they did, several times leveling at the crowd. One person was killed, many were grievously wounded. The magistrates of Newry, although far from being friendly to the Catholic people, were scandalized at this atrocity. They offered a reward for the discovery of the perpetrators, inclosed a copy of their publication to the Duke of Richmond, and prayed him to take some measures for the protection of the Catholics, who, they said, were all unarmed, while the very lowest class of Protestants were well provided with fire-arms. The Duke made a civil but unmeaning reply, expressing his "regret" at the sad circumstance. Some weeks elapsed, and still no measures were adopted. In the meantime one of the persons concerned in the outrage was apprehended, but was allowed to escape by the yeomen to whose custody Lord Gosford had intrusted him; and a number of the same corps to which the murderers belonged, so far from showing any shame or regret at the conduct of their comrades, one day returning from parade, fired a volley (by way of *bravado*) over the house of M'Keown (father of the deceased), the report of which threw his wife into convulsions.

Several inhabitants of the townland of Corinshiga came to the magistrates and made depositions as to the continual terror and danger of themselves and their families, and the atrocious threats of the Orange yeomen who lived near them. Mr. Waring, one of the magistrates, who appears to have exerted himself earnestly in this affair, sent to the Castle copies of these depositions, and intreated the Government to issue a proclamation, offering a reward for the assassins, and to take some measures of repressing open outrage.

Mr. Secretary Traill replied coldly that the Government declined to do anything in the matter. Mr. Waring again wrote, still more earnestly, "that the magistrates had expected that Government would have issued a proclamation offering a reward for prosecution, and pardon to some concerned for evidence against the others; that if this had not the desired effect, still much good might be expected to arise from the marked disapprobation of Government of an outrage of so dangerous and alarming a tendency; that it



might appear not unworthy the consideration of his Grace whether such a measure might not even then (the 3d of August, 1808) be adopted with propriety; and that this procedure, so far from having a tendency to supersede the exertions of the local magistracy, could not but prove an efficient aid to them." This last letter was not answered, and so the business dropped.\* The advertisement or proclamation of the Newry magistrates was sent to the *Hue and Cry*, but was not inserted. Not the least notice was taken of it or the letter accompanying it. Such was the unblushing tenderness of the Duke of Richmond for the band of eighteen Orangemen, each and every one of whom was guilty of open murder. Not one of them was ever brought to justice, and to this day the inhabitants of that and many another Catholic neighbourhood in Ulster, when the anniversaries of the 1st and 12th of July come round, either bar themselves up in their houses and put out all lights, or else prepare for defensive battle.

The foregoing incident is related in detail, because it is a characteristic example of many similar cases; save indeed that the local magistrates, instead of seeking to bring offenders to justice, as in this case, have generally sought to screen them. If an atrocity like this had been at any time done by Catholics, troops would immediately have been sent down to quarter themselves upon their houses, and a special commission would have been issued to hang at least eighteen, guilty or innocent.

It was not merely in the way of direct encouragement to lawless Orangeism that Lord Richmond's administration showed its settled design of trampling down the Catholics. We have seen that in Dublin the wealthiest and most respectable merchants were insultingly kept out of the Bank Direction because they were Catholics. In the counties, Catholic gentlemen, whose property and position entitled them to be called upon the Grand Juries, were studiously excluded. If any High Sheriff of a county was not a supporter of the Ministerial policy, or was known to be favourable to his Catholic neighbours, his name was carefully excluded from the next list. And in all these measures, Sir Arthur Wellesley was unusually active and rigorous. The time, indeed, had almost come when his services would be required in the Spanish Peninsula: and his native country could well spare him.

During this year (1803) corruption seems to have been almost as rife in Ire-

land as it had been immediately before the Union; and seats in Parliament were bought and sold. Early in the session of 1809 Mr. Maddox brought forward a specific charge of this sort of corruption, criminating Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Spencer Perceval, stating, amongst other things, that at the last general election a sum of money was paid by Mr. Quintin Dick to Lord Castlereagh, through means of the Honourable Henry Wellesley, and that gentleman (Mr. Dick) was thereby returned member for Cashel; and Mr. Spencer Perceval was also a party to the transaction. Upon occasion of the late investigation as to the Duke of York, Mr. Quintin Dick waited upon Lord Castlereagh, and informed him of the vote he meant to give; and the noble lord, not approving of that mode of voting, suggested to him the propriety of relinquishing his seat in Parliament.

Mr. Perceval, indeed, refused to plead to the charge; said it was an insidious plan to lay the foundation for a measure of Parliamentary reform—which it certainly was—and so bowed to the Speaker, and went out. Lord Castlereagh followed his example; but it is quite evident the charge must have been true, otherwise there would not have been, in a House of six hundred and fifteen, in the teeth of all Ministerial influence, the large minority of three hundred and ten for a motion to inquire. There is every reason to believe that Sir Arthur Wellesley, during his Secretaryship, took the largest share in all this traffic for seats and votes and influence. He had a mind of the character usually termed "eminently practical;" and thought he had a right, as he declared long after, speaking of his administration in Ireland, "to turn the moral weakness of individuals to good account;" that is, to the account of his party.

In the session of Parliament, in 1809, little or no attention was given to the affairs of Ireland. An attempt was made by Mr. Parnell to carry a motion for inquiry into the mode of collecting tithes in this country. The grievances and oppressions connected with the Church Establishment, and the irritating spoliation of the people, for support of clergymen whose ministrations were of no use to them, were but too well known already, and needed no committee of inquiry at all. On this very ground the motion was opposed by Ministers, who, having no idea whatever of giving any relief or redress, naturally enough refused the empty formality of an inquiry. The Chancellor of the Exchequer "did not think that the House was in ignorance with respect to the subject of

\* See abstract of the whole correspondence in Plowden's (Volume III.) *Post-Union History*.



tithes in Ireland; but that the difficulty was, how to find out a practical mode of securing the property of the Church. He could not be persuaded that any inquiry, either by commission or committee, would do any good; for they did not *want information*."

In the short debate on this motion, Sir John Newport observed, that he thought Lord Castlereagh bound, by his former professions at the Union, to find out some modifications to lighten the burdens of the poor oppressed people of Ireland. Instead of doing so, that noble Lord appeared to forget all his pledges for the public good, and merely to attend to those that went to provide for individuals, whom he had taken care to seduce to his own standard. Lord Castlereagh arrogantly asserted that he knew of no pledge made, either by Mr. Pitt or himself, upon the subject of tithes, or the *Catholic question*. He most distinctly denied that he had ever made any pledge whatever as to Ireland. Mr. C. Hutchinson deprecated the conduct of Lord Castlereagh as to Ireland. He was the parent of the Union, and in order to effect it he had made many promises; but, whenever any question as to the amelioration of the situation of Ireland came to be agitated, he either put a negative upon it, or moved the previous question. And, in fact, by the "previous question," the whole question was put aside upon this occasion also.

On the 24th of May was held, in Dublin, a numerous meeting of the Catholics, to consider what step they should take to further their claims. The requisition convening the meeting was signed by Lord Netterville, Sir Francis Goold, Daniel O'Connell, Richard O'Gorman, Edward Hay, Denis Scully, Doctor Dromgoole, and many others whose names have since been familiar in connection with the Catholic cause. Mr. O'Gorman opened the proceedings with a speech, in which he proposed to petition Parliament. This was opposed by the veteran John Keogh, who spoke with great bitterness of the treachery practised towards the Catholics in the matter of the Union, and deprecated petitioning altogether, at least while the existing Ministry remained in power. Mr. Keogh observed that, with respect to the existence and oppressiveness of their grievances, they were unanimous, and differed only as to the means most likely to remove them. He was ready, on his part, to sacrifice, to burn with his own hands the resolution which he was about to propose to the meeting, if any man could show him what was likely to be more effectual to promote the object of all their wishes. A

petition at the present moment must, if presented, be presented to decided enemies or lukewarm friends, upon neither of whom could be placed any reliance for success. Mr. Perceval and his colleagues were admitted into office upon the express condition of excluding the Catholic claims from the relief of the Legislature; and their predecessors had very willingly consented to give up a bill, nominally only in favour of the Catholics, rather than resign their places. Mr. Keogh adverted in strong and pointed terms to the double imposition practised upon the Catholics at the time of the Union. He insisted that the proposals for their support from the Unionists and the Anti-Unionists were equally hollow and equally insidious. Had it been otherwise, had the Catholics been liberally treated by their Parliament, they would have raised a cry in its defence that would have been heard, and would have shaken the plan of Union to atoms. No man had a right to suppose that he wished to relinquish the Catholic claims. With his dying breath, with his last words, as a testamentary bequest to his countrymen, he would recommend to them never to relinquish, never even to relax, in the pursuit of their undoubted rights. No man could expect success to the petition. Without that expectation, he saw nothing likely to accrue from the measure but mischievous and injurious consequences. He resisted the measure, not for the purpose of retarding, but of forwarding the Catholic claims.

Mr. Keogh, therefore, moved a resolution in accordance with these views, which was passed; but the meeting then proceeded to organize a new Catholic committee, consisting of the Catholic peers, and the survivors of the Catholic delegates of 1793, together with certain gentlemen who had been lately appointed by the Catholics of Dublin to prepare an address. It was resolved that these persons "do possess the confidence of the Catholic body."

This new committee was to be permanent; and was to consider the expediency of preparing a petition, not to the then sitting, but to the next session of Parliament. The committee, undoubtedly, was capable of being regarded as a virtual representation of the Irish Catholics, and, therefore, as coming under the penalties of the "Convention Act;" for which reason Mr. O'Connell, who knew that the Government was watching their proceedings with a jealous eye, endeavoured to guard against this legal peril by introducing a resolution which was carried unanimously:—"That the noblemen and gen-



tlements aforesaid are not representatives of the Catholic body, or any portion thereof; nor shall they assume or pretend to be representatives of the Catholic body, or any portion thereof."

We thus find Mr. O'Connell, from the first of his long series of agitations, always anxiously steering clear of the rocks and shoals of law; and find, also, that the most dangerous of those rocks and shoals was always the same "Convention Act." It embarrassed the Catholic Committee in 1809; it stopped the "Council of Three Hundred" in 1845; and, in fact, it had been passed for the very purpose of preventing all organized deliberation, and all effectual action by Catholics for the attainment of their rights. There is no doubt that the Government might at any time have prosecuted to conviction the members of this Catholic committee as *delegates* (notwithstanding their disclaimer) by means of a well-packed Castle jury; but, in the meantime, the affairs of the Catholics seemed to acquire some consistency and strength from the permanent organization of the committee and the respectability of its members. Of course this circumstance alarmed and infuriated the Orangemen, who are generally believed to have at the same time remodelled and improved their societies. It is not easy to arrive at the exact truth regarding all the secret tests, and oaths, and "degrees" of this mischievous body—the precise forms have been from time to time altered; and their "Grand Masters" and their organs of the press have boldly denied what is alleged against the society, although such allegation had been true very shortly before, and was substantially true when denied, even if some trifling form may have been altered, to justify the denial.

Mr. Plowden, writing in 1810, says very distinctly that "a renovation of the system (of Orangeism) actually prevailed in the year 1809," and that new oaths were introduced. He says, further:—

"It was reported, believed, and not contradicted, that about the time at which the Catholic bishops of Ireland were assembled in National Synod to oppose the *veto*, the Orange associations met by deputation in Dawson Street, Dublin, in order, as may be naturally presumed, to counteract the presumed resolutions of that Episcopal Synod, and to make head generally against the alarming growth of Popery. A deputy from the seventy-two English (almost all Lancastrian) Lodges came over in unusual pomp of accredited diplomacy to the Irish societies. Through the gloom of Orange darkness it would be

presumption to ascertain the points of debate within their strictly guarded sanctuary in Dawson Street." The same writer observes:—

"So much undeniable truth has lately been brought before the public concerning the Orange institution—so glaringly has the illegality and mischief of the system been exposed—such weighty and fatal objections urged against it—that it has become fashionable with many Orangemen of education and fortune to affect to disclaim everything objectionable in the system, and to throw it exclusively upon the incorrigible ignorance and bigotry of the rabble, who are alike in every country, and of every persuasion. This was base artifice to disguise or conceal the countenance and support which the Orange societies have uniformly and unceasingly received from Government. If the obligations and oaths of Orangemen were of a virtuous and beneficial tendency, why not proclaim them aloud? If illegal and dangerous, why criminally conceal them? Whilst the Orange aristocracy thus affects to disclaim their own institute in detail, their activity in keeping the evil on foot is supereminently criminal. Nor can they redeem their guilt without revealing in detail the whole mischief of the system, by enabling others, or co-operating effectually themselves (as far as they possess power), to expose and effectually extinguish it."

Upon the subject of the new and alarming development of the Orange system which took place at this date, we may further cite the language of O'Connell at an aggregate meeting in May, 1811. He said:—

"From most respectable authority I have it that Orange lodges are increasing in different parts of the country, with the knowledge of those whose duty it is to suppress them. If I have been misinformed, I would wish that what I now say may be replied to by any one able to show that I am wrong. I hold in my hand the certificate of an Orange purple man (which he produced), who was advanced to that degree as lately as the 24th of April, 1811, in a lodge in Dublin. I have adduced this fact to show you that this dreadful and abominable conspiracy is still in existence; and I am well informed, and believe it to be the fact, that the King's Ministry are well acquainted with this circumstance. I have been also assured that the associations in the North are re-organized, and that a committee of these delegates in Belfast have printed and distributed five hundred copies of their new constitution. This I have heard



from excellent authority ; and I should not be surprised if the Attorney-General knows it. Yet there has been no attempt to disturb these conspirators ; no attempt to visit them with magisterial authority ; no attempt to rout this infamous banditti."

In truth, the "banditti" were so useful and indispensable an agency of British domination in Ireland, that they were perfectly safe from the law and the Attorney-General ; and that functionary was not in the least obliged to O'Connell for his information. It was against Catholics only that penal statutes were made. Thus, although the Convention Act makes no distinctions between Catholic and Protestant, the Orange lodges were never at all embarrassed about sending delegates to a meeting in Dublin. And, although the Acts against administering secret oaths especially apply to the oaths of Orangemen, no Orangeman was ever prosecuted by the Crown under those laws. The oath which Government punished was not an oath to extirpate one's neighbours, but an oath to promote the union of Irishmen.

It would be easy to accumulate examples of Orange outrages at this time in many parts of the country ; but these incidents have a wearisome sameness. On the 12th of August, 1808, fifty unarmed men of the King's County Militia, who had volunteered into the line, marched from Strabane into Omagh, in Tyrone County, where fifty of their comrades occupied the barracks. As they came into the town, it happened that three hundred Orange yeomen had assembled, and were celebrating the battle of Aughrim. A yeoman began operations by knocking off and trampling upon the cap of one of the militiamen because it was bound with green, which, though regimental, was not considered "loyal" enough for that occasion. The militiaman resented the outrage by a blow. A general assault was made by the whole body of yeomanry upon the fifty unarmed men ; they retreated in good order to the barrack, where they were attacked again ; but as they were now supplied with arms, they defended themselves to some purpose, and killed four of their assailants. Thomas Hogan, a corporal of the King's County Militia, was tried for the murder of those four men, and was actually found guilty of manslaughter.

Again, at Mountrath, the annual return of the Orange festival, in July, 1808, had been disgraced by the most atrocious murder of the Rev. Mr. Duane, the Catholic priest of that parish ; and it was followed

up in the succeeding year by the no less barbarous murder of a Catholic of the name of Kavanagh, into whose house the armed yeomen rushed, and barbarously fractured his skull in the presence of his wife and four infant children. On the first day of this same July, at Bailieborough, in the County Cavan, the Orange armed yeomen went in a body to the house of the parish priest, at whom they fired several shots, and left him for dead. They then wrecked the chapel, and wounded and insulted every Catholic they met.

None of the persons guilty of these outrages, either at Mountrath or Bailieborough, was ever punished, or even questioned.

But while the Government of the Duke of Richmond thus encouraged Orange outrage, and screened the perpetrators, his Grace sometimes affected to deprecate violent demonstrations of the society, at least in his own presence. For example, he made a tour through Munster in the summer of this year, 1809 ; and as the object of his excursion was chiefly to conciliate the Catholics of that province (many of whom were wealthy and influential), and so to prevent them from joining in the agitation for their own rights, he issued orders that no distinctively Orange displays should take place on his line of route. The town of Bandon was in those days a great stronghold of Orangeism in the South, and possessed a "legion" of six hundred yeomanry, all brethren of the Order. On the 1st of July, the yeomanry being assembled according to custom, to celebrate the battle of the Boyne, and to flaunt before the eyes of the oppressed Catholics the emblems of their defeat, they were astonished at being addressed by their Commander and Grand-Master, Lord Bandon, in a very unusual strain. He said : "Those Orange emblems were calculated to keep up animosities, and his Grace the Lord-Lieutenant did not wish anything of the sort *on the present occasion*." The men suddenly dispersed in high indignation. The next parade day was the 6th, and they again assembled ; but to show how they valued the homily of Lord Bandon, every man of them appeared decorated with Orange lilies.

The Earl of Bandon and Colonel Oriel, the inspecting officer of the district, observed that if they wished to be considered really obedient and loyal, they would attend to the orders of their officers, as Government seemed particularly anxious to prevent the further wearing of any emblem of this kind. They



then ordered them either to take these marks of distinction down, or else to ground their arms. The corps for some time remained undecisive, when at length, with the exception of twenty-five, they indignantly threw down their arms and accoutrements, sooner than obey the command of Government delivered through their officer. The whole yeomanry of Bandon amounted to about six hundred men. On the 24th of July, 1809, the members composing the Boyne, Union, and True Blue corps of yeomanry, under the denomination of the Loyal Bandon Legion, openly declared the cause for which they laid down their arms.\*

This "defection of the Bandon Orangemen," as it was called, made the Government very cautious for long afterwards how it showed the least displeasure against these "loyal" displays, or the outrages which nearly always attended them. Indeed, Grand-Masters and Ascendancy journals often coolly reminded the successive Chief-Governors of Ireland that English dominion could not be maintained one day in Ireland without the lodges, which was true; so that Lords-Lieutenant and Ministers, while feeling themselves bound in common decency to affect, at least, to deprecate violence, and hypocritically to advise concord and good feeling, have been exceedingly tender of wounding the sensibilities of those people, who were, and are, their only support in the country.

So well had the Castle succeeded during the administration of the Duke of Richmond in undoing all that the Volunteers and United Irishmen had done, and in making impossible that union of Irishmen, which was the only thing the Castle feared in the world.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1810—1812.

Duke of Richmond's "Conciliation"—Orange Oppression—Treatment of Catholic Soldiers—The *Veto* again—Debate on *Veto* in Parliament—Catholic Petition presented by Grattan—Rejected—O'Connell's Leadership—New Organization of Catholics—Repeal of the Union first Agitated—Insanity of the King—Treachery of the Regent—Prosecution of the Catholic Committee—Convention Act—Suppression of the Committee—New Measures of O'Connell—Mr. Curran at Newry Election—Effects of the Union.

THE Duke of Richmond was one of our "conciliatory" Viceroys. In his tour through the South he rendered himself

more than usually affable and urbane; and, having a frank and gracious manner, he was not without some success in soothing the Catholics, whom long oppression had rendered too credulously impressible by a few words of hollow and hypocritical kindness. At a moment when it was notorious that he was acting as the zealous agent of a *No-Popery* Administration, that he was excluding Catholic gentlemen from the Grand Juries, Catholic merchants from the Bank, that Catholic soldiers were regularly punished by their officers for going to mass, and that his Grace's Orange banditti were killing and maiming their Catholic neighbours with a perfect certainty of impunity, we find that at the entertainment given by the Corporation of Waterford to the Lord-Lieutenant, his Grace's affability and attention to all were conspicuous. He took an opportunity of addressing Doctor Power, the Catholic Bishop of Waterford, whom in a gracious and cordial style he thanked for his and his flock's conduct in putting down the disturbances in their county. He openly and distinctly assured him that he had it in special instructions from His Majesty to make no distinction between Protestant and Catholic, which injunction he emphatically declared he had punctiliously complied with ever since he had undertaken the government of the country, as far as the laws would allow of. Those laws, he lamented, it was not in his power to deviate from. Such was the travelling style of the Vice-regal Court. At the dinner given to his Grace by the Mayor and Corporation of Cork at the Mansion House, amongst the regular Corporation toasts was announced, in its order, the *Protestant Ascendancy of Ireland*, on which his Grace arose and declared he wished to see no ascendancy in Ireland but that of loyalty, and strongly recommended the same line of conduct to be pursued by all good subjects.

At another dinner in Cork, given by the merchants, traders, and bankers, his Excellency had even the sanctimonious audacity to express his wonder that religion, being only occupied with a great object of eternal concern, men should be excited to rancorous enmity because they sought the same great end by paths somewhat different. This kind of language, which has been the common style of Irish Viceroys ever since, was first brought into vogue by the *No-Popery* Duke of Richmond; and what is very remarkable, it so far imposed upon many simple-minded Catholics that they were afterwards but slow and reluctant

\* For a fuller account of these transactions at Bandon, see Plowden, Vol. III. of *Post-Union History*.



in even coming forward to petition for their withheld rights and franchises.

In the meantime, the daily and continual oppressions and humiliations which were inflicted upon the Catholics, not only by Orange magistrates and yeomen, but by the Government itself, were too notorious and too galling to be soothed away by the fair words of a conciliatory Viceroy. The treatment of Catholic soldiers in the army (of which they already constituted nearly one-half) excited the strongest and bitterest feelings of discontent. At Enniskillen, a Lieutenant Walsh turned a soldier's coat, in order to disgrace him, for refusing to attend the Protestant service; others were effectually prevented from attending the service of their own Church, by an order not to quit the barracks till two o'clock on the Sunday, when the Catholic service was over, as at Newry. The case which acquired the most publicity, and produced the strongest effect upon Ireland, was that of Patrick Spence, a private in the County Dublin Militia, who had been required (though known to be a Catholic) to attend the Divine service of the Established Church, and upon refusal, was thrown into the Black Hole. During his imprisonment he wrote a letter to Major White, his commanding officer, urging that in obeying the paramount dictates of conscience he had in no manner broken in upon military discipline. He was shortly after brought to a court-martial, upon a charge that his letter was disrespectful, and had a mutinous tendency. He was convicted, and sentenced to receive nine hundred and ninety-nine lashes. Upon being brought out to undergo that punishment, an offer was made to him to commute it for an engagement to enlist in a corps constantly serving abroad; this he accepted, and was transmitted to the Isle of Wight, in order to be sent out of the kingdom. The case having been represented to the Lord-Lieutenant by Doctor Troy, the titular Archbishop of Dublin, Mr. W. Pole wrote him a letter, which stated that the sentence had been passed upon Spence for writing the disrespectful letter; not denying, therefore admitting, that the committal to the "Black Hole" was for the refusal to attend the Protestant Church; but that, under all the circumstances, the Commander-in-Chief had considered the punishment excessive, and had ordered the man to be liberated, and to join his regiment. When Spence arrived in Dublin, he was confined several days, and then discharged altogether from the army. The copy of Spence's letter, which he vouched to be

authentic, contained nothing in it either disrespectful or mutinous. The original letter was often called for, and always refused by those who had it in their possession, and might, consequently, by its production determine the justice of the sentence of nine hundred and ninety-nine lashes.

Many other examples of this kind of petty tyranny occurred about the same time; and as no officer was ever punished or reprimanded for any of them, they are sufficient to indicate the real feelings of the Government, and how much sincerity there was in the after-dinner liberality of the Duke of Richmond. In short, it was the settled design of the British Government, not only to break the promises made for carrying the Union (as it had formerly broken the treaty of Limerick), but also to make the Catholics feel in their daily life the whole bitterness of their degradation.

They had, of course, no representative in the British Parliament; and it appeared, in the course of the year 1810, that such Protestant friends and advocates as they possessed in that assembly—Mr. Grattan and Mr. Ponsonby, for example—desired to effect their emancipation only on the terms of enslaving the Catholic Church to the State by means of the *veto*. The subject of *veto* was now revived, both in Parliament and in the country. The English Catholics, in *their* petitions for relief, offered to accept emancipation on such terms; that is, on the terms of giving to a Protestant State a discretion as to the appointment of their bishops. In Ireland, that idea was now universally repulsed by the clergy and laity; although, as before stated, it had once been favourably received by a few of the higher clergy.

Late in January, 1810, was held a large meeting of the Catholics of Dublin. The Secretary, Mr. Hay, stated, that the most Rev. Doctor Troy had received from an English member of Parliament (Sir John Cox Hoppesley) a letter, accompanied by an explanatory printed copy of a sketch of proposed regulations, concurrent with the establishment of a State provision, for the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland.\*

\* The Catholic historian, Plowden, says: "This deep-laid plan, suggested by Sir John Cox Hoppesley, fathered by Mr. Pitt, adopted by Lord Grenville, palmed by Lord Castlereagh upon the duped or intimidated Trustees of Maynooth College, in contemplation of the Union, was now brought forward with the privacy and approbation of several of the leading members of the Board of British Catholics. The concluding sentence speaks in full its primary intent. "All confirm the principle, that the sovereign power in every State, of whatever religious communion, has considered itself armed with legitimate authority in all matters of ecclesiastical arrangement within its dominion."



It was the project of *veto* in all its nakedness, but recommended both by the prospect of civil emancipation and by a State provision for the clergy. To the credit of the whole Catholic body (for it must be admitted that the bribe was high), all proposals of this nature were rejected, and rejected with indignation. A petition was prepared for presentation to Parliament asking for unconditional emancipation, intrusted to Lord Fingal, who carried it to London, and presented by Mr. Grattan. But, although he presented it, he said that it was merely in order to have the claims of the Catholics put on record; that he had hoped the Irish Catholics would be willing to allow, on the appointment of their bishops, a *veto* to the Crown; "he was sorry to see that at present no such sentiment appeared to prevail." Mr. Grattan had still the same violent horror of "French influence," which had formerly prevented him from joining the United Irishmen. "The Pope," he said, "was almost certain now to be a subject of France; and a subject of France, or French citizen, could never be permitted to nominate the spiritual magistrates of the people of Ireland." In short, Mr. Grattan, in both the speeches which he made in this session, spoke *against* the petition which he had presented. It would be tedious to make even an abstract of the debate; and it will be sufficient to say that on the motion for going into committee with the Catholic petition, Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Grattan, and Sir John Cox Hipplesey, were in favour of the motion *subject to veto*; Mr. Hutcheson, Mr. Parnell, and Sir John Newport, in favour of it *without veto*; Lord Castlereagh wholly against it in every shape; so, of course, were Mr. Perceval, and all other members of the No-Popery Administration; and the motion was lost by a majority against the Catholic claims of one hundred and four.

In June, the petition was presented by Lord Donoughmore to the Lords, in a very fair and just speech. He said, speaking of the Catholic Church: "No man was so ignorant as not to know that its professed unity in doctrine and in discipline, under one and the same declared head, was the essential distinguishing characteristic of the Catholic Church, and yet they were told that the Irish Catholics were the most unreasonable of men, because they would not renounce upon oath this first tenet of their religion, and consent to recognize a new head of their Church in the person of a Protestant King. The Irish Catholic, under the existing tests, solemnly abjures the au-

thority of the Pope in all temporal matters, pledges himself to be a faithful subject of the King, and to defend the succession of the Crown, and the arrangement of property as now established by law, and that he will not exercise any privilege to which he is, or may become, entitled to disturb the Protestant religion, or Protestant government. What possible ground of apprehension could there be which was not effectually provided against by the terms of this oath? With respect to that ill-fated *veto*, the introduction of which into the Catholic vocabulary he witnessed with sincere regret, he could only say for himself, that he wanted no additional security; but he was equally ready to acknowledge that it was the bounden duty of the Catholic, whenever the happy moment of conciliation should arrive, to go the full length his religion would permit him, to quiet the scruples, however groundless and imaginary, of the Protestant Legislature."

After a short debate—in which we find Lord Holland, Lord Erskine, the Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Grey, speaking in favour of going into committee on the petition; against it, Lord Liverpool, Lord Clancarty, Lord Redesdale, and the Lord Chancellor—there appeared on a division, for the motion, sixty-eight; non-contents, one hundred and fifty-four; majority against the Catholics, eighty-six.

It was now at last tolerably evident that there was no use in petitioning that Parliament to acknowledge the rights of Catholics; that the insidious promises made by Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh, for the purpose of carrying the Union, were to be deliberately disregarded; and that the Catholic cause must be either abandoned altogether, or must be taken up by some more potent hand than any of those which had guided it up to that time. Daniel O'Connell was to be the new leader of the Irish Catholic cause, and may be said to date the commencement of his wonderful career of agitation from the Parliamentary defeat sustained by the petition of 1810. In a month after the rejection of that petition, the general committee of the Catholics, after passing a vote of thanks to the worthy old John Keogh "for his long and faithful services to the cause of Catholic Emancipation," issued an address to all the Catholics of Ireland, urging upon them a new and more combined form of political action, and bearing the signature of "Daniel O'Connell, Chairman." The programme of action presented in this address is substantially the same which was followed up by Mr. O'Connell, under several successive



names, throughout all his agitations—local organizations holding frequent meetings, and corresponding with a central committee in Dublin. All proceedings were to be peaceful and legal; yet there was the *hint* of a possibility that millions of people, steadily denied their rights, might in the end be driven to extort them with the strong hand. Here is an extract:—

“Still, *whilst time and opportunity yet remain for peaceful counsels*, the virtuous Catholic will deeply revolve in his mind the wisest course for his redemption. He will prefer that success which promises the greatest permanent enjoyment to himself and his family; the most salutary to his country; the most conformable to the best laws and dearest precepts of civil society. He will prefer to oppose courses those of peace, of reason, and of temperate, but firm perseverance in well-regulated efforts.

“The committee, sir, consulting not merely local, but general feelings, entertain every wish and hope of calling into fair and free exercise the unbiased judgment and independent opinions of the Catholics of Ireland, thinking and acting for themselves throughout their respective counties, districts, cities, and towns, and deciding upon such measures as shall appear to them most eligible.

“They hope that the Catholics will take frequent opportunities, and as early as possible, of holding local meetings for these purposes; and there, unfettered by external authority, and unaffected by dictation, apply their most serious consideration to subjects of common and weighty concern, with the candour and directness of mind which appertain to the national character.

“The establishment of permanent boards, holding communication with the General Committee in Dublin, has been deemed in several counties highly useful to the interests of the Catholic cause.

“Nothing is more necessary amongst us than self-agency. It will produce that system of coherence of conduct which must insure success.

“In the exercise of the elective franchise, for instance, what infinite good might not result from Catholic coherence? What painful examples are annually exhibited of the mischief flowing from the want of this coherence?

“The Catholic Committee have, therefore, every reason to expect the most beneficial effects to the general cause, from local and frequent meetings.”

During this same summer was heard the first loud cry for a *Repeal of the*

*Union*. In the Corporation of Dublin—then, of course, an exclusively Protestant body—Mr. Hutton, pursuant to notice, made an impressive speech, in which he powerfully depicted the ruin, bankruptcy, despair, and famine, that were apparent in every street of Dublin; pointed out that the debt of the nation was then *above ninety millions*; that two millions sterling, wrung from the sweat of Irish peasants, were squandered in a foreign country by absentees,\* and that £2,500,000 more was drained away to pay the interest on that insupportable debt. He proposed resolutions to the effect, that the cure for all these evils was the Repeal of the Union. Of course, he was vehemently opposed by Giffard and his party; but the resolutions were carried by a majority of thirty.

The next step was a requisition from the Grand Jurors of Dublin to the two High Sheriffs, Sir Edward Stanley and Sir James Riddall, to call a meeting of the freemen and freeholders, to consider “*the necessity that exists* of presenting a petition to His Majesty and the Imperial Parliament, for a Repeal of the Act of Union.” Stanley declined to call such a meeting; he said it “would agitate the public mind.” But Riddall called the meeting. On the 18th of September, at the Royal Exchange, was held this memorable meeting, at which both Protestants and Catholics were unanimous, not only in affirming the universal misery and beggary of the country, but in attributing the whole to that fatal and fraudulent measure called the Act of Union. O’Connell delivered, on this occasion, a speech of the most concentrated power and passion, which deeply impressed his audience and the entire nation. It was at once printed on a broadside, surmounted with a portrait of the orator; and O’Connell was from that moment the leader to whom all Catholics turned with pride and hope. The resolutions for the preparation of a petition for repeal of the Union were adopted unanimously.

What we have to remark is, that in these first movements favouring repeal of the Union, all speakers concurred in representing the material and financial effects of that measure as disastrous in the extreme to Ireland; yet those speakers do not appear to have bethought them that the impoverishment of Ireland was the exact measure of the profit to England; that this was the specific object

\* Dean Swift estimated the absentee rents in his time at half a million sterling, and thought that same a great grievance. In 1848, Mr. Smith O’Brien, always moderate in his statements, said the drain through this single channel amounted to five millions.



for which England had demanded, contrived, and accomplished the Union; and that the existing relation between the two countries was the accurate fulfilment of the prediction made by that honest Englishman, Samuel Johnson, to an Irish acquaintance—"Sir, we shall rob you."

The Catholics of Ireland were by this time quite unanimous in favour of repealing that Union, the perpetration of which they had been induced to regard with indifference, or almost with complacency. At least, they knew how treacherously they had been dealt with on this occasion by the English Government and its agents, Cornwallis and Castlereagh; and the natural soreness which they felt at being duped, aggravated the sufferings which fell upon them, as well as upon the Protestants, in consequence of depressed trade and ruined manufactures.

"Repeal" was, therefore, fairly before the country; but it was too late for any peaceful redress. When the shark has once made his *union* with his prey, he does not easily disgorge; for this there needs, either a miracle, as in the case of Jonah's fish, or else that the shark be killed and cut up. *Petitioning* for restitution of that rich prey is, perhaps, the most imbecile idea that ever possessed any public man since the beginning of the world.

Catholic Emancipation, however, was another kind of question, and one quite susceptible of a peaceful solution; because to emancipate Catholics would cost England nothing, but, on the contrary, would probably win over many of the leading, educated, and professional Catholics, who might be induced, by the prospect of honours and emoluments for themselves, to abandon their people to plunder and extirpation, and to sell the cause of their country to its enemies—an anticipation which we have unhappily seen realized on a large scale.

Catholic Emancipation, then, although a minor question, was the immediately practical one for an Irish agitator; and O'Connell saw that it was so, and devoted himself to it accordingly.

In October, King George III. fell into his final and irremediable insanity, and the Prince again became Regent: this time with almost full regal powers. It was a matter of no interest whatsoever to Ireland; save that many Catholics were simple enough to believe that it removed the only real obstacle to their emancipation—namely, the stupid scruples of the idiot King as to his coronation oath. The Prince had made many professions—

even distinct promises and pledges, afterwards minutely specified by O'Connell—that, so soon as he should enjoy actual power, he would do all that in him lay to bring about Catholic Emancipation. In 1806, he had made such a pledge through the Duke of Bedford, then Viceroy, in order to induce the Catholics to withhold their petitions; his good friends, the Catholics, were to trust all to *him*, the Prince. Mr. Ponsonby, then Chancellor, had, in the same year, promulgated a similar promise in the Prince's name. He had himself given such a pledge to Lord Kenmare, at Cheltenham. Finally, he had given a formal verbal pledge to Lord Fingal, in presence of Lord Petre and Lord Clifford, which was reduced to writing by those three noblemen, and signed by them soon after the interview ended. The Prince had now uncontrolled power; and, as usual, the Catholics found themselves cheated. He retained as his Prime Minister the *No-Popery* Perceval, and was surrounded by advisers intensely hostile to the Catholic cause. His mistress at that time was the wife of the Marquis of Hertford; and the conscience of that lady could not reconcile itself to the thought of conceding any right to persons who believed in seven sacraments. Even the two Protestant sacraments were one too many for her ladyship.\*

Almost the first act of any consequence done in Ireland, after the Prince became Regent, was a State prosecution instituted against the Catholic Committee, in the persons of two of its members, Mr. Kirwan and Doctor Sheridan, who were charged to have been elected as delegates, in breach of the Convention Act. The Government had been long watching for this chance, and now the Castle strained every nerve to insure a conviction. Mr. Saurin, Attorney-General, commenced his speech thus: "My Lords, and Gentlemen of the Jury, I cannot but congratulate you and the public *that the day of justice has at last arrived*;"—surely a most extraordinary expression under the circumstances, seeing that these Catholics were but peacefully claiming their manifest right; and seeing that the crime of which

\* Certain resolutions passed in the Catholic Committee but too plainly referred to this woman, when they spoke of the "fatal witchery" which had led the Regent to form a Ministry hostile to liberty of conscience in Ireland. The enchantress was over fifty years of age; and her husband and her son were the closest boon-companions of the lover of the father's wife and of the son's mother. These famous "witchery" resolutions were supposed to have so strongly aroused the Protestant feelings of the Prince as to adjourn all thought of Catholic Emancipation for many years, and to have been the cause of the exceedingly bad grace with which King George IV. at last assented to that measure.



they were now accused was unknown to the law of England. Mr. Bushe, then Solicitor-General, afterwards Chief-Justice, speaking of the committee, constituted as it was, thus concluded his speech upon that trial: "Compare such a constitution with the established authorities of the land, all controlled, confined to their respective spheres, balancing and gravitating to each other—all symmetry, all order, all harmony. Behold, on the other hand, this prodigy in the political hemisphere, with eccentric course and portentous glare, bound by no attraction, disdaining any orbit, disturbing the system, and affrighting the world!" The remedy for this horrible comet was a packed jury, which is one of those "established authorities, all symmetry and harmony," spoken of by Mr. Bushe. A conviction was obtained; and the Catholic Committee, in that form, ceased to exist. Mr. Shiel says: "A great blow had been struck at the cause, and a considerable time elapsed before Ireland recovered from it."

But although that organization was at an end, many angry meetings were held; and the Catholic press assumed a tone of aggression and defiance which had not been usual with it. Mr. O'Connell, in conjunction with Mr. Scully, a gentleman of large property and high talent, established a newspaper; and both in the press and in public assemblies, there was manifested by the popular leaders so much boldness and activity, as assured all men that the cause of the nation was now in a fresh and vigorous hand.

Mr. Wellesley Pole had been appointed Irish Secretary of State, as successor to his brother, Lord Wellington; and his administration was chiefly noted for his circular letter against meeting in conventions, with a view to the suppression of the Catholic Committee. Mr. Wellesley Pole was soon after succeeded by Mr. Robert Peel, who proved himself during many years after the most deadly, and, indeed, most fatal foe the Irish nation ever encountered. He was but twenty-four years of age; and continued Chief Secretary for six years, during which time he closely studied the character and wants of the people; so that of all English statesmen in modern times, Sir Robert Peel may be said to have understood Ireland best,—to Ireland's bitter cost.

In 1812, Mr. Perceval, the "No-Popery" Prime Minister, was assassinated by a maniac, in the lobby of the House of Commons; and a change of administration became necessary. But the new arrangements had little interest for Irishmen, and presented no hope of any approach to jus-

tice in the treatment of that country. Lord Liverpool was Prime Minister, and both Canning and Castlereagh were members of the Cabinet. A dissolution of Parliament and general election followed, at which several additional "Liberals" were returned from places in Ireland. Mr. Curran was persuaded by his friends, and invited by the Liberal electors of Newry, to permit himself to be placed in nomination for that borough. He had never, since the Union, sought to enter the British Parliament; and it was with no sanguine hope of being able to effect any good there for his country that he now essayed to enter public life once more. He was defeated at Newry—defeated by General Needham, one of the military tyrants who had dragooned the people into insurrection in 1798. But in Mr. Curran's speech on that occasion, to the electors of Newry, though imperfectly reported, is found a passage most vividly depicting the condition of Ireland twelve years after the Union, and Curran's estimate of the nature and effects of that measure. He said: "The whole history of mankind records no instance of any hostile Cabinet, perhaps even of any Cabinet, actuated by the principles of honour or of shame. The Irish Catholic was, therefore, taught to believe that if he surrendered his country he would cease to be a slave. The Irish Protestant was cajoled into the belief that, if he concurred in the surrender, he would be placed upon the neck of a hostile faction. Wretched dupe! you might as well persuade the jailor that he is less a prisoner than the captives he locks up, merely because he carries the key in his pocket. By that reciprocal animosity, however, Ireland was surrendered. The guilt of the surrender was most atrocious; the consequences of the crime most tremendous and exemplary. We put ourselves into a condition of the most unqualified servitude; we sold our country, and we levied upon ourselves the price of the purchase; we gave up the right of disposing of our own property; we yielded to a foreign legislature to decide whether the funds necessary to their projects, or their profligacy, should be extracted from us or be furnished by themselves. The consequence has been that our scanty means have been squandered in her internal corruption as profusely as our best blood has been wasted in the madness of her aggressions, or the feeble folly of her resistance. Our debt has, accordingly, been increased *more than ten-fold*; the common comforts of life have been vanishing; we are sinking into beggary; our poor people have



been worried by cruel and unprincipled prosecutions; and the instruments of our Government have been almost simplified into the tax-gatherer and the hangman." This dismal picture of the condition of his country could not have been made in so public a manner, and by a man of Curran's character, unless it had been true. He could not have ventured to tell a large assembly of his countrymen that they were ground down by taxes and sinking into beggary, if they could all have risen up and contradicted him on the spot. Besides, the evidence from other quarters is too clear and strong to allow us to doubt of the accuracy of any one feature in the sombre scene he depicts. The country was, during all those years, as usual, disturbed now and then by a vindictive murder of some bailiff, or agent, who had turned poor families adrift, and pulled down their houses; or some tithe-proctor, who had seized on a widow's stack-yard. And all these acts of vengeance or despair were uniformly treated as seditious "insurrections." Ireland, therefore, remained under an almost uninterrupted *Insurrection Act*. The Act of *Habeas Corpus* had been suspended in 1800 by the Act for the *Suppression of the Rebellion*; that Act had been continued in 1801, and again in 1804, and had been replaced in 1807 by another martial law (substantially the same law), called the *Insurrection Act*, which was maintained until 1810. It will be seen hereafter how steadily the same exceptional coercion laws, but with ingenious variations of name, have been continued down to this day.

When Mr. Curran mentioned that the people were "worried by cruel and unprincipled prosecutions," he had in his thoughts the long series of "special commissions" sent down in state to the country, to hang up some scores of haggard wretches, and to terrify the rest; he was thinking of the many fathers of poor families, who were often dragged to jail without a charge against them, and without the right to demand a trial; he was thinking of the free course which suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* gave to the vindictive outrages of Orange magistrates, and to the fanatical rage of packed juries.

So uniform has been the long passion of Ireland—generation after generation wasting and withering under the very same atrocity which calls itself "Government;" the children losing heart and hope, as their fathers had done, and begetting a progeny to pine away under the same miseries still—until they are tempted to doubt whether a just God reigns over the earth.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1813—1821.

Grattan's Emancipation Bill—More *Veto*—Quarantotti—Unanimity in Ireland against *Veto*—Mr. Peel and his New Police—Stipendiary Magistrates—Close of the War—Restoration of the Bourbons—Waterloo—Evil Effects on Ireland—The Irish Legion in France—Its Fate—Miles Byrne and his Friends—Effects of the Peace in Impoverishing the Irish—Cheap Ejectment Law passed—Beginning of Extermination—"Surplus Population"—Catholic Claims Ruined by the Peace—O'Connell and Catholic Board—Board Suppressed—O'Connell in Court—His Audacity—His Scorn of the Dublin Corporation—Duel with D'Esterre—Distress in Ireland—Famine of 1817—Coercion in Ireland—"Six Acts" in England—Mr. Plunket's Emancipation Bill—Peel and the Duke of York—Royal Visit to Ireland—Catholics Cheated Again.

MR. GRATTAN made his final effort to effect the Emancipation of the Catholics in the first session of the new Parliament, in 1813. The bill which he proposed was a very imperfect and restricted one; but it provided that Catholics should sit in Parliament, and hold certain offices, excepting those of Lord-Chancellor, either in England or in Ireland, and that of Lord-Lieutenant, or Lord-Deputy, in Ireland. It did not include a provision for the Royal *veto* upon Catholic bishops. The debate which ensued is scarce worth recording, inasmuch as, after several amendments providing for *veto*, and at last an amendment striking out the clause enabling Catholics to sit and vote in Parliament, the bill was withdrawn, and finally lost.

The *veto* amendments proposed by Castlereagh and Canning were the work of Sir John Hippley, that indefatigable patron of *veto*. They proposed to constitute a Board of Commissioners to examine into the *loyalty* of those proposed for episcopal functions, and to exercise a *surveillance* and control over their official correspondence with Rome. But the Irish Catholics were now fully alive to the insidious nature of this proposal; and both clergy and people, with great unanimity, rejected all idea of Emancipation upon any such terms. But the English Catholics, not having any *national* interest at stake in the matter, were quite favourable to the project, and used their utmost endeavours to have it accepted at Rome, and recommended from thence. English influence was then very strong at Rome. The Pope was a prisoner in France; and it was to the coalition of European sovereigns against Buonaparte that the Court of Rome looked for its re-establishment. A certain Monsignor Quarantotti exercised in the year 1814 the official authority



of the Pope, and was induced, under English influence, to recommend submission to the *veto* in a letter or rescript to "the Right Rev. William Poynter," Vicar-Apostolic of the London district. As the question of *veto* at that period occupied so large a share of public attention both in England and in Ireland, it may be but just to let this Monsignor Quarantotti state, in his own way, the view which was taken of it at Rome; and therefore we give an extract from the most material passage of his rescript:—

"As to the desire of the Government to be informed of the loyalty of those who are promoted to the dignity of bishop or dean, and to be assured that they possess those qualifications which belong to a faithful subject; as to the intention also, of forming a board for the ascertainment of those points, by inquiring into the character of those who shall be presented, and reporting thereon to the King, according to the tenor of your lordship's letter; and, finally, as to the determination of Government to have none admitted to those dignities who either are not natural-born subjects, or who have not been residents in the kingdom for four years preceding. As all these provisions regard matters that are merely political, they are entitled to all indulgence. It is better, indeed, that the prelates of our Church should be acceptable to the King, in order that they may exercise their ministry with his full concurrence, and also that there may be no doubts of their integrity, even with those who are not in the bosom of the Church. For 'it behoveth a bishop (as the Apostle teaches, 1 Tim. iii. 7) even to have a good witness from those who are not of the Church.' Upon these principles we, in virtue of the authority intrusted to us, grant permission that those who are elected to and proposed for bishoprics and deaneries by the clergy, may be admitted or rejected by the King, according to the law proposed. When therefore the clergy shall have, according to the usual custom, elected those whom they shall judge most worthy in the Lord to possess those dignities, the Metropolitan of the province, in Ireland, or the senior Vicar-Apostolic of England and Scotland, shall give notice of the election, that the King's approbation or dissent may be had thereupon. If the candidates be rejected, others shall be proposed who may be acceptable to the King; but if approved of, the Metropolitan or Vicar-Apostolic, as above, shall send the documents to the Sacred Congregation here, the members whereof, hav-

ing duly weighed the merits of each, shall take measures for the obtainment of canonical institution from His Holiness. I perceive also that another duty is assigned to the Board above-mentioned—namely, that they are charged to inspect all letters written by the ecclesiastical power to any of the British clergy, and examine carefully whether they contain anything which may be injurious to the Government, or anywise disturb the public tranquillity. Inasmuch as a communication on ecclesiastical or spiritual affairs with the head of the Church is not forbidden, and as the inspection of the Board relates to political subjects only, this also must be submitted to. It is right that the Government should not have cause to entertain any suspicion with regard to the communication between us. What we write will bear the eyes of the world, for we intermeddle not with matters of a political nature, but are occupied about those things which the Divine and the ecclesiastical law, and the good order of the Church, appear to require. Those matters only are to be kept under the seal of silence which pertain to the jurisdiction of conscience within us; and of this it appears to me sufficient care has been taken in the clauses of the law alluded to. We are perfectly convinced that so wise a Government as that of Great Britain, while it studies to provide for the public security, does not on that account wish to compel the Catholics to desert their religion; but would rather be pleased that they should be careful observers of it. For our holy and truly Divine religion is most favourable to public authority, is the best support of thrones, and the most powerful teacher both of loyalty and patriotism."

This did by no means suit the views of the Irish Catholics, or their idea of "loyalty and patriotism." As they did not themselves "possess those qualifications which belong to a faithful subject," they naturally thought that their clergy should not. They believed, indeed, and not without reason, that loyalty and faithful attachment, on the part of the Irish Catholic clergy, towards a foreign and hostile Government, meant neither more nor less than a formal abandonment of the people to the mercy of their enemies, and a desertion of the cause of those faithful and devoted Catholics who had stood by their clergy in the worst of times, when a price was set upon a priest's head. In fact, the sequel proved that the Irish clergy of that day were not so base as it was hoped they would be. The bishops sent a strong remonstrance to



Rome by the hands of Dr. Murray, coadjutor to the Archbishop of Dublin, which, however, was not regarded in the least, so powerful was the political influence of England in the councils of the Holy See. Doctor Murray returned to Ireland. At a meeting of the prelates very energetic resolutions were adopted, one of which ran in these terms:—"Though we sincerely venerate the Supreme Pontiff as visible Head of the Church, we do not conceive that our apprehensions for the safety of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland can or ought to be removed by any determination of His Holiness, adopted, or intended to be adopted, not only without our concurrence, but in direct opposition to our repeated resolutions, and the very energetic memorial presented on our behalf, and so ably supported by our deputy, the most Rev. Doctor Murray, who, in that quality, was more competent to inform His Holiness of the real state and interests of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland *than any other with whom he is said to have consulted.*"

This last phrase meant the emissaries of the English Catholics, then busy at Rome; and the English Catholics have been at all times as zealous and resolute to keep Ireland subject to English domination in all respects, as any "No-Popery" Briton or Orange Grand-Master could be. The resolutions were signed by all the Catholic bishops in Ireland, and transmitted to Rome by the same Doctor Murray, accompanied by the Bishop of Cork. A vehement agitation was aroused in Ireland, which extended to the laity as well as the clergy; and, under the potent impulse of O'Connell, a resolute spirit of resistance manifested itself in the whole Catholic population, against any orders or recommendations coming even from Rome itself, tending to enchain their national Church.

While this *veto* commotion agitated the Catholics, Mr. Robert Peel, the Irish Secretary, was engaged in re-organizing and greatly increasing the Constabulary force, with a view to render it a more efficient instrument in the hands of the English Government for the coercion of the country, and the detection of seditious proceedings. With the same view, Mr. Peel invented and established the class of stipendiary or police magistrates, who were to take their instructions from the Castle, and whose business was to control and direct, as far as possible, the proceedings of justices of the peace at petty sessions and quarter sessions, and to guard against any movement of independent feeling on the part of

country gentlemen who were in the commission of the peace. The men chosen for this office of stipendiary magistrate have been usually briefless barristers, or broken-down politicians in a small way, to whom the salary was a desirable livelihood; and as they have at least legal phrases at their command, a supposed acquaintance with the views of the Castle, and great self-importance of manner, it has been found in practice that these paid officials have really, to a great extent, controlled and managed the local administration of justice; which, in all conscience, had been bad enough before. Mr. Peel's police arrangements were extremely unpopular; and his new constables and stipendiaries were popularly termed *Peelers*. But although the Irish, by an infallible instinct, abhorred the new system, they were yet far from suspecting to what a deadly use Mr. Peel would eventually put his new force.

In the meantime, the grand war of coalized Europe against the French Empire drew to a close. The French armies were driven out of Spain by the patriotic efforts of the Spanish people, aided by a British force under Lord Wellington—for the English Government, with the great object of crushing the French, was willing, in a distant country, to ally itself even with patriotism. The Emperor Napoleon, after the tremendous slaughter at Leipsic (in which he fought all Europe), had been obliged gradually to withdraw his forces into France. But though he made a most brilliant and fierce resistance to the advance of the allies, they surrounded Paris in overwhelming numbers; and the great Emperor was forced, in an evil hour, to abdicate at Fontainebleau. The coalized kings and oligarchies of Europe triumphed; and the expelled Bourbons came back to sit on the throne of France for awhile. The "Congress of Vienna" was called, to settle Europe upon the basis of a distinct denial of every human right and every national aspiration; and the fitting representative of England in that Congress was no other than Lord Castlereagh, the artizan of the Irish Union.

It does not enter within the compass of this narrative to detail the wonderful series of events which followed—the escape of Buonaparte from Elba, the enthusiastic uprising of France in his favour, the tricolour flying from steeple to steeple, the reign of a Hundred Days, the renewed concentration of the forces of the allies, and the sad disaster of Waterloo. Waterloo, like every other triumph of the arms and policy of England, was, of course, a fatal misfortune to Ireland. It confirmed the



odious rule of an insolent oligarchy both in England and in Ireland, and placed it high, as was hoped and believed, above all apprehension of revolution and democracy. Waterloo put an end at once to all interest in Catholic claims on the part even of the "Liberals," and adjourned for fourteen years all thought either of Emancipation or of Reform. The defeat of Waterloo was not, indeed, so much a defeat for France, as for other oppressed countries of Europe; for in France the great revolution had been accomplished, and its work could not be undone. In France, all religious sects were equal, and remained equal before the law; all feudal privilege was, and remained, abolished; and all men, like all religions, were on an equal footing; in France, the people were in possession, and remained in possession, of the great confiscated estates, each one of which made hundreds or thousands of farms for free peasants; in France, tithes were, and remained, abolished; the highest dignity of the State was open to the meanest mechanic; the highest grade in the army to the humblest private. It was earnestly hoped, indeed, by the coalized allies of the Bourbons, that the forcible restoration of that family would speedily reverse and abolish all these dangerous privileges of the French people—but that was impossible. The sentiment and practice of justice and equality had entered too deeply into the life and soul of France to be eradicated even by foreign bayonets. But for Ireland, the case was very different. The apprehension of a triumph of "French principles"—that is, principles of equality and justice—which had been for twenty-five years a dreadful bugbear to the British oligarchy—was now at an end; and *privilege*, and Church and State, and the "Ascendancy," reigned supreme.

Of the armies which triumphed on the field of Waterloo, about one-fourth consisted of British troops; and of these "British" troops, nearly one-half were Irish. It is a shame to be obliged to confess it. Their country can take no pride in those Irishmen; Irish history refuses to know their names. They fought under a commander who always opposed and denied their right to rank on an equality with his other soldiers; they fought to perpetuate a domination which oppressed and despised them; fought against their own enfranchisement, and their own right to land and life on their own soil; and to establish, on an immovable basis, that odious British system which has since degraded, impoverished, and almost depopulated their country. While a vestige of genuine Irish feeling remains amongst

our people, Irishmen will speak with pride of the Irish Brigade at Fontenoy, and with shame and repugnance of the Irish regiments at Waterloo.

There were, indeed, some true Irishmen in the service of France at that period. The Irish Legion, the relics of '98, as the old brigades were the relics of Limerick. In this Legion and its gallant officers, Ware, Allen, Byrne, Corbet, Lawless, MacSheehy, centred the genuine military renown of the Irish race at that day. But the Legion was not present at Waterloo; it had fought through the Peninsular campaign, and had taken part in some of the last battles of the campaign of 1814. It had thus been sadly reduced in numbers; and during the first Restoration, (before the Hundred Days), it had been entirely re-organized, and reduced to a regiment. At the time of the final struggle on the plains of Belgium, the regiment was stationed at Montreuil, on the shore of the British Channel; and after the calamity of Waterloo, and the treacherous capture of Napoleon, the Irish regiment, as well as all the rest of the army, was disbanded; and the officers were allowed at first to retire upon their half-pay to any town they might select in France, where, says the venerable Miles Byrne, "they hoped at least to enjoy the pittance and the protection of the law." But it is mortifying to learn that through the paramount influence of Castlereagh with the new Government, and through the base compliance of Clarke, Duc de Feltre (himself the son of an Irishman), these forlorn exiles were persecuted with a mean malignity, which only the spite of Lord Castlereagh could have suggested. Before quitting Montreuil to be disbanded, orders had been given to deface and destroy all their insignia and memorials of service—a bitter ordeal for the veteran heroes. Colonel Byrne, in his lately published memoirs, gives some account of the affair. He says:—

"Two beautiful standards were sent to Spain by the Emperor in 1810, for the second and third battalions of the Irish regiment, but they were left at Valadolid, as those battalions were then in Portugal. These standards were brought to the depot of the regiment, and were destroyed by Lieutenant Montague at Montreuil. They were green, with a large harp in the centre. On one side, in gold letters, 'Napoleon I. to the second Irish Battalion.' And on the other, 'The Independence of Ireland.' The third the same. The Eagle was carried by the first battalion, which, of course, had its colours like the others."

"The officers of the council left at Mon-



treuil received two-thirds of their pay until the February following, and when all was finished, they retired on half-pay like the other officers, hoping at least to remain unmolested. But soon after the battle of Waterloo, the brave regiment was disbanded by Louis XVIII., and the Irish officers were made to feel that Lord Castlereagh and English influence prevailed in the French councils.

"Commandant Allen, who had retired to Melun, was ordered from that town to Rouen; and, passing by Paris, was there arrested by order of the Duke of Feltre, and informed he must quit the French territory without delay. Thus, without trial or judgment, one of those officers whose gallant actions had gained such renown for the Irish regiment, both in Spain and Silesia, was to be banished from his adopted country, by the orders of General Clarke, the son of an Irishman."

Many others of the officers, including Miles Byrne himself, were in like manner ordered in the harshest manner to quit France; but long afterwards we find most of them again upon active duty in the French service. Scarcely one was base enough to offer his services to England; and nothing could irritate these gentlemen so much as any suggestion of seeking a British pardon, or accepting a British favour.\*

Poor Curran, when near his last, and in great misery of body and mind, had made a visit to Paris in August, 1814, and had met there some of the Irish officers. In a letter to a friend, which afterwards was made public, he had spoken of his wish to see *mercy and compassion* shown them by the English Government. Miles Byrne tells us in his memoirs:—

"I recollect a coincidence. In August, 1814, whilst at Avesnes, Inspector-General Burke was preparing his report to the Minister of War on the merits and claims of the brave Irish officers returning from the Russian prisons of Siberia, as well as those officers who escaped from Flushing, and from the English pontons, Curran's very ill-timed and most silly letters from Paris, in August, 1814, to his friend, Councillor Denis Lube, were published in the Dublin newspapers. The following extract is from one of them on the Irish exiles:—

\*The officers of the Legion were almost all restored afterwards to active service in the armies of their adopted country. Corbet became a Major-General, and for some time commanded at Caen. Miles Byrne was commandant of Patras, in the war of Greece, and died in 1862; his rank was that of *Chef de Bataillon* in the Fifty-sixth Regiment of the Line.

"‘I had hopes that England might let them back. The season and the power of mischief is long past; the number is almost too small to do credit to the mercy that casts a look upon them. But they are destined to give their last recollection of the green fields they are never to behold, on a foreign deathbed, and to lose the sad delight of fancied visits to them in a distant grave.’

"It caused no little indignation amongst the Irish officers who had read it, and several of them met at dinner at the *Trois Frères*, in the *Palais Royal*, to talk it over. These were General Lawless, who came in from Saint Germain for the meeting, Commandant O'Reilly, Captain Luke Lawless, Edward Lewens, and John Sweetman, &c. We were a mixture of civil and military at dinner.

"General Lawless asked Arthur Barker, as the youngest (for he was still a student at the Irish College), to read those famous letters. When read, General Lawless, turning to Lewens, said: ‘You must have told Curran that our number was not worth the commiseration of Castle-reagh.’ ‘Me, Sir!’ cried Lewens, in a great passion; ‘how could you think me capable of any such thing?’ General Lawless rejoined: ‘Of the exiles at Paris, Curran only saw you and Corbet.’ It would have been better had he vented his spleen and ill-humour on something else. He might have let the brave Irish officers who have escaped the dangers of their various campaigns be again placed on active service."

Indeed, to the very last, we find the survivors of these noble Irish exiles looking forward with anxious hope to a renewal of war between France and England, that they might have one other chance of striking a mortal blow at the enemy of their country. We may be excused for giving one other characteristic extract from the Byrne memoir. Speaking of Corbet (who died a French Major-General), Colonel Byrne says:

"General Corbet was officer of the Legion of Honour, Knight of Saint Louis, and Commander of the Order of the Saviour in Greece. He valued those distinctions as highly honourable, no doubt, but he would sometimes say: ‘How much the more valuable would they have been, had they been gained in the cause of my native country!’ And to his last moment he lamented that her independence was not obtained; and he seemed ever anxious for something to arise between the governments of France and England which might prove beneficial to his own country.



"In 1840, we frequently consulted about the way we could be best employed to serve Ireland, in the event of a war between France and England, which was then on the point of being declared. I remember one day, after an audience he had had with the Minister of War, on the situation of Ireland, he told me that the Minister, General Schneider, was very desirous to have a conversation with me, respecting the reliance which could be placed on the then leader of the Irish, when a French army should land in Ireland. When he saw that there was to be no war with England, he would speak to me of going to the United States of America, being sure, he said, that from that country, one day or other, Ireland would receive ultimate assistance."

So the wholesome tradition is handed down unbroken; any and every foe of England is the Irish exile's friend; and the power of Britain must be, indeed, broadly and deeply based, if it for ever withstand the long-gathering tempest of just wrath which has been laid up against the day of wrath.

The close of the great war on the Continent had certain direct effects upon Ireland. The immense demand for agricultural produce, for victualling of armies and fortresses, had maintained high prices; and as large numbers of the small farmers then possessed leases—granted by landlords in order to manufacture voting freeholders—the people generally lived with some approach to comparative comfort. Immense contracts for the provisioning of the English navy were also made at Cork; and thus the war prices, one way and another, brought money into the country, which was not all immediately sent out again, but actually circulated to some extent amongst the people. It is true that landlords, wherever they had tenants from year to year, steadily raised the rents as prices advanced, but still the good-natured and kindly people helped one another; and, on the whole, there was not very much of either extermination or emigration. In 1815, however, and the few following years, prices of grain, cattle, and other produce, fell very low, and rents were not reduced in proportion. The increase of population—for there were now six millions of people in Ireland—produced that deadly competition for small farms which has enabled Irish landlords to wring the vitals out of a helpless peasantry, who had been left no other resource but labour on the land. Extermination may properly be said to have begun in good earnest just after "French principles" were crushed at

Waterloo; and, to facilitate this process for the landlords, by recommendation of Mr. Robert Peel, the first of the series of cheap ejectment laws was passed in this very year, 1815. It provided that, in all cases of holdings, the rent of which was under £20—which included the whole class of small farms—the assistant-barrister, at sessions, could make a decree, at the cost of a few shillings, to eject a man from house and farm. Two years after, the proceedings in ejectment were still further simplified and facilitated by an Act making the sole evidence of a landlord or his agent sufficient testimony for ascertaining the amount of rent due. By these two Acts it was rendered very easy to sweep out on the highways the whole population of a village or a townland; and this was very often done towards tenants at will—a race of beings which exists in no country of Europe save Ireland. As for the possessors of a forty-shilling freehold, their leases and their voting capacity protected them for a time. It is about this date that we first meet with the expression, "surplus population in Ireland;" although, indeed, the idea itself had been common enough nearly a hundred years earlier, when Swift published his "*Modest Proposal*." At all events, it is evident that from this moment, and for many years after, every English statesman, publicist, and political economist, held it as the grand fundamental maxim in treating of Irish affairs, that there was a surplus population in that island, and the steadiest and most earnest aim of every administration, of every party, has been to devise and execute some sure method of removing—that is, extirpating or killing—the said surplus. The young Irish Secretary, Mr. Peel, who was destined to become one of England's greatest statesmen, had, of course, turned his attention to this momentous object, and had commenced operations, as we have seen, by laws providing for cheap and easy ejectment; but he had yet other methods in his mind which were not then matured, or for which the time was not yet come.

The effect of the peace upon the prospects and claims of Catholics was altogether adverse and discouraging. England felt not only secure but triumphant, and, according to the invariable rule, it fared ill with Ireland. The English oligarchy and its dependent, the Irish Ascendancy, were absolutely drunken with an insolent and malignant pride. *Concession* of anything was no longer to be thought of; and if any person presumed to hint that there existed such a thing as human



rights, he was set down as a Jacobin. A "Catholic Board" had maintained its struggling existence until the middle of summer, 1814. But whenever the news of the capitulation of Paris and imprisonment of Napoleon arrived in England, orders were at once sent to Lord Whitworth, the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to suppress the board summarily by proclamation, which was accordingly done upon the 3d of June, in that year. The board met no more; but, under O'Connell's direction, the agitation took the form of "Aggregate Meetings"—thus avoiding all possibility of incurring the penalties of the Convention Act, while the meetings were even more useful than the board in arousing the people, diffusing sound information as to their rights and their wrongs, and keeping up a continual public commentary upon current events. There ensued, however, differences and dissensions amongst the Catholic leaders as to the most expedient policy to be pursued. The *veto* question had not yet entirely subsided, and something of the old jealousy between the aristocratic Catholics and the mass of the people revived. Lord Fingal, in fact, together with some other Catholic gentlemen of rank, and others who courted rank and position, retired from all participation in public affairs for some years. On the other hand, O'Connell led and stirred the democracy. But it must be confessed that it was a most arduous and difficult enterprise for him, although then in the full vigour of his vast powers, to keep alive the cause of Catholic Emancipation at all in those days of triumphant bigotry and tyranny. Richard Lalor Shiel, speaking of this gloomy period, scruples not to say: "*The hopes of the Catholics fell with the peace. A long interval elapsed in which nothing very important or deserving of record took place. A political lethargy spread itself over the great body of the people; the assemblies of the Catholics became more unfrequent, and their language more despondent and hopeless than it had ever been.*"\* And never before, for half a century, had the "Protestant interest" shown itself so aggressive and so spiteful towards the Catholic people. O'Connell, by his activity and audacity, concentrated upon himself the greater part of this Protestant wrath. For he made no scruple, whether in a public harangue to the people or in a speech to a jury (where the trial had anything of a political character), to denounce, with a rough and rasping tongue, all kinds of injustice and bigotry,

\* Notice of "Catholic Leaders and Associations," in *Sketches of the Irish Bar*.

packed juries, church rates—in short, the most cherished principles and practices of "our glorious Constitution in Church and State." In the celebrated speech for John Magee, proprietor of the *Evening Post*, who was prosecuted for a seditious libel upon the Government, O'Connell had not only adopted and repeated the "libel," but aggravated it a thousand-fold. With a fierce and vindictive energy he laid bare the whole atrocious system which in Ireland passes for Government. He thundered into the ears of the judge that he had first advised this prosecution which he was now pretending to try; and as for the twelve pious Protestants in the jury box (all "saints," and members of the "Society for the Suppression of Vice"), he told them, with cruel taunts, that they knew they were fraudulently *packed*, that they should find a man guilty (so help them God!) for stating what they knew to be true.

Mr. Shiel, in his admirable sketch of O'Connell, says: "The admirers of King William have no mercy for a man who, in his seditious moods, is so provoking as to tell the world that their idol was 'a Dutch adventurer.' Then his intolerable success in a profession where many a staunch Protestant is condemned to starve—and his fashionable house in Merrion Square—and, a greater eyesore still, his dashing revolutionary equipage, green carriage, green liveries, and turbulent, Popish steeds, prancing over a Protestant pavement, to the terror of Protestant passengers—these, and other provocations of equal publicity, have exposed this learned culprit to the deep detestation of a numerous class of His Majesty's hating subjects in Ireland. And the feeling is duly communicated to the public: the loyal press of Dublin teems with the most astounding imputations upon his character and motives." The provocation of the "Popish horses prancing over a Protestant pavement" was more serious than it may now appear, for the pavement was strictly Protestant, and so were the street lamps. No Catholic, though he might drive a coach-and-four, could be admitted upon any paving or lighting board in that sacred stronghold of the Ascendancy, the Corporation of Dublin.\* O'Connell was in the habit of speaking with supreme contempt of the

\* It was at the height of the Catholic agitation that a Town Councillor, who was a tailor, said at a Corporation dinner: "My lord, these Papists may get their Emancipation, they may sit in Parliament, they may preside upon the Bench, a Papist may become Lord-Chancellor or Privy-Councillor; but never, never shall one of them set foot in the ancient and loyal Guild of Tailors."



little municipal close borough, and in one of his speeches of this year, 1815, he termed it "a beggarly corporation." "One of its most needy members," says Shiel, "was Mr. D'Esterre," and he, thinking the epithet "beggarly" too scurrilous, and too closely personal, at once sent a challenge to the speaker. O'Connell committed his conduct as to the reception of the challenge to the decision of his friends. The parties met, fought with pistols, and D'Esterre was killed, to the very great and lasting sorrow of his slayer. Mr. Shiel does not say expressly, but says "it is understood," that D'Esterre was induced to attempt O'Connell's life by the expectation that if he should rid the Government of so formidable an agitator he would be rewarded with a place; and he adds, "His claims would probably not have been overlooked by the patrons of the time." On what precise evidence Mr. D'Esterre was charged with undertaking the base job of a mercenary assassin, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves. At any rate, no dishonourable practice in the conduct of the affair was ever imputed.

In the year 1816, Sir John Newport moved in Parliament for a committee to inquire into the state of Ireland, which was then suffering greatly from scarcity of food. Sir Robert Peel steadily and successfully resisted the proposed inquiry. That prudent statesman had not been several years Chief Secretary of Ireland for nothing. He had no need of inquiry, being quite well aware of what was passing in Ireland, where he knew that things were falling out exactly according to his calculations. If there was some extermination of starving wretches, it was because his cheap ejection laws were working well. If there was some disturbance and "agrarian crime," he had his new police ready to repress it. Better than all, he had procured the renewal of the "Insurrection Act" in 1814, had caused it to be continued in 1815, and it was now (1816) in full vigour, filling the jails with persons who could not give a good account of themselves, and transporting men for possessing a fowling-piece. He felt that an assiduous Irish Secretary could do no more, and naturally resisted Sir John Newport's meddling motion for inquiry.

But, in truth, the low price of produce had made thousands of farmers unable to pay the rent; then they had been ejected; and then that lowness of price could not enable them to procure food, because they had no money. Then there

was an occasional murder, or attempt at murder. Magistrates would meet, and write to the Castle for immediate proclamation of the county under the Insurrection Act. It is useless to go through the unvarying detail of torturing oppression which has continued and repeated itself year after year, and will never end while the British Empire stands. But, in sad earnest, this year (1817) was a season of dreadful famine and suffering; and, of course, the Coercion Act of the year before was carefully renewed. The potato crop had failed; and although Ireland was then largely exporting grain and cattle to England,\* yet this good food was not supposed to be sent by Providence for the nourishment of those who sowed and reaped it on their own soil. It is instructive to remark the constant similarity of the circumstances attending the series of Irish famines—the wholesale export of the Irish crops to England, the wholesale disappearance, also, of the money received as the price of those crops in the shape of absentee rents, of "surplus revenue," &c., and the never-failing Coercion Acts. If in the famine of 1847–48 there was a much greater destruction of the people, and, at the same time, a much larger export of their food and their money to England, it is only because the British system was then more fully perfected in all its details than in 1817.

In that year, however, the suffering from famine and typhus fever was already dreadful enough; and in the most fertile counties of Ireland, multitudes of people fed upon weeds of various sorts—some boiled nettles, others subsisted upon the wild kail, called in Irish *prashagh*. All political movement was suspended for several years, both in Ireland and in England; and in 1819, Lord Sidmouth introduced and carried his celebrated "Six Acts," principally to quell the "seditious" aspirations of the English people. These Acts imposed heavy penalties upon the possession of arms, and upon "blasphemous and seditious libels"—meaning all plain and truthful comments upon the proceedings of Government. A horrible military massacre was perpetrated this year at Peterloo, near Manchester, by the onslaught of a body of troops upon a perfectly peaceable meeting of the people to demand reform. This bloody day was the 16th of August, 1819; and one of the "Six Acts," passed immediately after, prohibited under cruel penalties the as-

\* In this year (1817) the export to England, of grain alone, was 695,651 *quarters*.—Thom's *Official Tables in Directory*.



sembling of more than fifty persons together, unless at a meeting called by the magistrates. In short, it was the British "Reign of Terror," not inaugurated, as in France, by the people, to rid themselves of their oppressors, but by the oppressors to crush the people and their French principles into the earth.

On the 28th of February, 1821, Mr. Plunket brought up in Parliament a bill for Catholic Emancipation. It was at an unfavourable time; all the governing and controlling opinion of England was averse to any kind of claim for *rights*. The bill was vehemently opposed by the Tory party, and especially by Sir Robert Peel. In the House of Lords, the Duke of York, heir presumptive to the throne, made a furious speech against it; saying, amongst other things, that "there is a great difference between *allowing* the free exercise of religion, and the *granting* of political power"—as if there could be any freedom without political power, or as if freedom and political power were things to be allowed and granted by persons who might lawfully withhold them. It was in the same year, in the month of August, that King George IV. condescended to make a triumphal visit to Ireland; and that Mr. O'Connell, with certain views of "policy" which will not be universally appreciated, testified an enthusiastic loyalty to that individual, and drank at a public dinner the "Orange Charter toast." Overpowered by the cordiality of his reception, the King quitted the soil of Ireland with tears of emotion in his eyes. On the spot where he embarked stands a granite monument, surmounted by a crown; and Dunleary changed its name to Kingstown. It would be agreeable not to record these incidents; but they form, unhappily, part of the history of Ireland.

Touehing this royal visit—not to insist in this place upon the savage comment of Lord Byron—we may give the more moderate prose of Richard Lalor Shiel: "Sir Benjamin Bloomfield arrived in Dublin before his master, and intimated the royal anxiety *that all differences and animosities should be laid aside*. Accordingly, it was agreed that a public dinner should be held at Morrison's, where the leaders of both parties should pledge each other in libations of everlasting amity. This national festivity took place; and, from the vehement protestations on both sides, it was

believed by many that a lasting reconciliation had been effected. Master Ellis and Mr. O'Connell almost embraced each other. The King arrived; the Catholics determined *not to obtrude their grievances upon him*. Accordingly, our gracious Sovereign passed rather an agreeable time in Dublin. He was hailed with tumultuous hurrahs wherever he passed; and in return for the enthusiastic reception which he had found, he directed Lord Sidmouth to write a letter recommending it to the people *to be united*. His Majesty shortly afterwards set sail with tears in his eyes from Kingstown. For a little while the Catholics continued under the miserable deception under which they had laboured during the royal sojourn; but when they found that no intention existed to introduce a change of system into Ireland—that the King's visit seemed an artifice, and Lord Sidmouth's epistle meant nothing—and that while men were changed, measures continued substantially unaltered, they began to perceive that some course more effective than a loyal solicitude not to disturb the repose of His Majesty should be adopted."

In short, the Irish Catholics were once more cheated; and it is not saying much for their perspicuity—for they were twice cheated by the same cheat. Neither can we ever look back with pleasure on the scenes of "loyal" servility enacted at that period by leading Irishmen—O'Connell toasting the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the "Dutch adventurer," and presenting a huge bunch of shamrocks to the discreditable being who then represented the desolating British domination. Doubtless these hypocritical demonstrations of "loyalty" to an enemy were transacted with an idea that it was a cunning policy to conciliate tyrants in England, and to disarm animosities at home. In these views they failed utterly, and have their place in history only as a signal example of gratuitous crouching and crawling.

The senseless gala of 1821 passed away the horrible famine of 1822 immediately followed.\*

\* John Philpot Curran died in 1817, on the 14th of October. His remains were buried first in London; afterwards removed to the cemetery of Glasnevin. Grattan died three years after, and had the very doubtful honour of a tomb in Westminster Abbey. These two great Irishmen left the country they loved in one of the gloomiest periods of her gloomy story.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

1822—1825.

**Famine of 1822—Its Causes—Financial Frauds upon Ireland—Horror of the Famine—Extermination—Suspension of *Habeas Corpus* Act—Castlereagh Cuts his Throat—Marquis Wellesley Viceroy—Sir Harecourt Lees—The Bottle Riot—Catholic Association Formed—Dr. Boyle, "J.K.L."—Progress of Catholic Association—"Catholic Rent"—Maynooth Professors "Loyal"—Rage of the Orangemen—"O'Connell, the Pope, and the Devil"—Passiveness of the Dissenters—O'Connell's Appeals to them—Intellectual and Literary Power of the Movement—Act to Suppress "Unlawful Associations"—First Attempt to Cheat the Catholics—A Relief Bill with "Wings"—Defeated Catholic Deputation in London—O'Connell and the Whigs—Strong Feeling in Ireland against "Wings."**

BEFORE proceeding to the details of this dreadful famine of 1822, it is needful to consider the financial relations of the two islands since the period of the "Union."

In 1816 was passed the Act for consolidating the British and Irish Exchequers—it is the 56th George III., cap. 98. It became operative on the 1st January, 1817.

The meaning of this consolidation was—charging Ireland with the whole debt of England, pre-union and post-union; and in like manner charging England with the whole Irish debt.

Now, the enormous English national debt, both before and after the Union, was contracted for purposes which Ireland had not only no interest in promoting, but a direct and vital interest in contravening and resisting; that is, it had been contracted to crush American and French liberty, and to destroy those very powers which were the natural allies of Ireland.

But this is not all. We have next to see the proportions which the two debts bore to each other. It will be remembered that, by the terms of the so-called "Union,"

I. Ireland was to be protected from any liability on account of the British national debt contracted prior to the Union.

II. The separate debt of each country being first provided for by a separate charge, Ireland was then to contribute two-seventeenths towards the joint or common expenditure of the United Kingdom for twenty years; after which her contribution was to be made proportionate to her ability, as ascertained at stated periods of revision by certain tests specified in the Act.

III. Ireland was not only promised that she never should have any concern with the then existing British debt, but she was also assured that her taxation

should not be raised to the standard of Great Britain until the following conditions should occur:—

1. That the two debts should come to bear to each other the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain to two parts for Ireland; and,
2. That the respective circumstances of the two countries should admit of uniform taxation.

It must be further borne in mind that, previous to the Union, the national debt of Ireland was a mere trifle. It had been enormously increased by charging to Ireland's special account, first, the expenses of getting up the rebellion; next, the expenses of suppressing it; and, lastly, the expenses of bribing Irish noble lords and gentlemen to sell their country at this Union. Thus the Irish debt, which before the Union had been less than three millions sterling, was set down by the Act of Union at nearly twenty-seven millions.

On the 20th of June, 1804 (four years after the Union had passed), Mr. Foster, Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, observed, that whereas in 1794 the Irish debt did not exceed two millions and a half, it had in 1803 risen to forty-three millions; and that during the current year it was increased to nearly fifty-three millions.

During the long and costly war against France, and the second American war, it happened, by some very extraordinary species of book-keeping, that while the English debt was not quite doubled, the Irish debt was more than quadrupled; as if Ireland had twice the interest which England had in forcing the Bourbons back upon France, and in destroying the commerce of America.

Thus, in 1816, when the Consolidation Act was passed, the whole funded debt of Ireland was found to be £130,561,037. By this management, the Irish debt, which in 1801 had been to the British as one to sixteen and a half, was forced up to bear to the British debt the ratio of one to seven and a half. This was the proportion required by the Act of Union as a condition of subjecting Ireland to indiscriminate taxation with Great Britain—a condition equally impudent and iniquitous. Ireland was to be loaded with inordinate debt; and then this debt was to be made the pretext for raising her taxation to the high British standard, and thereby rendering her liable to the pre-union debt of Great Britain!

By way of softening down the glaring injustice of such a proposition, Lord Castlereagh said that the two debts might



be brought to bear to each other the prescribed proportions, partly by the increase of the Irish debt, but partly also by the decrease of the British. To which Mr. Foster thus answered, on the 15th of March, 1800:—"The monstrous absurdity you would force down our throats is, that Ireland's increase of poverty, as shown by her increase of debt, and England's increase of wealth, as shown by diminution of debt, are to bring them to an equality of condition, so as to be able to bear an equality of taxation."

But bad as this was, the former and worse alternative was what really befell. The given ratio was reached solely by the increase of the Irish debt, without any decrease of the British.

We take from the excellent pamphlet of Mr. O'Neill Daunt,\* already quoted in a former chapter, a passage presenting a summary of the financial dealings of England with Ireland:—

"The following facts stand unshaken, and should become familiarly known to every man in Ireland:—

"1. The British debt in 1801 was about sixteen and a half times as large as the Irish debt.

"2. It was promised by the authors of the Union, and the promise was embodied in the seventh Article, that as Ireland had no part in contracting that debt, so she should be for ever preserved from all concern with the payment of its principal or interest.

"3. In order to give effect to this promise, Great Britain was to be separately taxed to the extent of her separate pre-union debt charge. But Great Britain is *not* thus separately taxed; and Ireland is consequently made to contribute to the payment of a purely British liability, from which she was promised perpetual exemption.

"4. Ireland has never received from Great Britain one farthing, by way of compensation or equivalent, for being thus subjected to the pre-union British debt.

"5. By the fifth clause of the seventh Article of the Union, Ireland was guaranteed the benefit of her own surplus taxes. She has never, during the sixty-four years of Union, received one farthing in virtue of that clause. Her taxes, after defraying her public domestic expenses, have been uniformly abstracted by England; and the clause that professes to secure to Ireland the use of them has been rendered a dead letter by the Parliamentary management I have described.

\* *Financial Grievances of Ireland*. Publications of the Irish National League.

"6. The amount of Irish taxes annually drawn from this kingdom is a very large item in the general pecuniary drain. Mr. Dillon, in his able and carefully compiled report to the Dublin Corporation, shows that the Irish taxes expended out of Ireland in the year 1860 amounted to £4,095,453; and that in 1861 they amounted to £3,970,715."

But even this direct drain of Irish money into England, under pretence of paying interest on a debt, represents a very small part of the systematic plunder of the country. When to this is added the absentee rental, the interest paid out of encumbered estates to Jews in London, and the cost of manufactured articles and colonial produce which Ireland ought to manufacture or import for herself, we may begin to understand why the mass of the Irish people is always on the verge of starvation, and why the failure of the meanest kind of food throws them at once into the pangs of famine.

This is what befell in 1822. Alison, the Scotch historian of modern times, attributes the dreadful havoc of the Irish famine in this year entirely to "the contraction of the currency, and consequent fall of the prices of agricultural produce fifty per cent." But the Scotch historian does not mention that the grain crop of 1821 had been carried off to England, to the amount of nearly two million quarters (1,822,816), and that of 1822 to the amount of more than one million quarters,\* not to speak of countless herds of cattle, sheep, and swine. No wonder, then, if we see in Ireland perennial misery and beggary, with occasional paroxysms of murderous famine.

On the 27th of June, in this year, Sir John Newport, of Waterford, in his place in the House of Commons, endeavouring to awaken that assembly to some sense of the horrors which were to be seen in Ireland, described one parish in his neighbourhood, where fifteen persons had already died of hunger; twenty-eight more, he said, were past all hope of recovery, and one hundred and twenty (still in the same parish) were prostrated by famine fever;—and the same speaker mentioned another parish where the priest had gone round and administered extreme unction to every man, woman, and child, *all in articulo mortis* by mere starvation.†

\* Thom's *Official Directory* for 1853.

† In Cobbett's *Register* we find that writer's contemporary comment upon the debate in the House. He says: "Money, it seems, is wanted in Ireland. Now, people do not eat money. No, but the money will buy them something to eat. What? The food is *there*, then. Pray observe this, and let the parties get out of the concern if they can. *The food is there*; but those who have it in their



A certain Colonel Patrickson was quartered that season in Galway with his regiment. He reports to his superior officer: "Hundreds of half-famished wretches arrive almost daily from a distance of fifty miles, many of them so exhausted by want of food that the means taken to restore them fail of effect, from the weakness of the digestive organs occasioned by long fasting."\* Official statistics were not then so much attended to as they have since been; but certain returns, such as they were, stated, that in the month of June there were, in Clare County alone, 99,639 persons subsisting on daily charity, and in Cork, 122,000.† We have no record of the estimated number of deaths in this hideous famine; and if we had any such estimate, compiled as it would be under the direction of the Irish authorities, by aid of their police, it would not be trustworthy. Neither are there any census-tables, showing the decrease of the population. In Thom's *Official Directory*, the population of the island in 1821 is given at 6,801,827; and there is no statement of the population afterwards for ten years.

Of course, there was again a good deal of extermination of tenantry; and some desperate men did certainly kill here and there an ejecting landlord or agent. It appears, also, that there were "nocturnal outrages;" men with faces blackened, and wearing shirts more or less white, did come to some houses in search of arms, to defend their lives or to avenge their wrongs; but in all this there was no trace or tittle of political, seditious, or revolutionary movement. Nevertheless, the first thing that occurred to the British Government, to meet this great calamity, was a new and improved *Insurrection Act*. This new Act, together with another for the suspension of the writ of *Habeas Corpus*, was introduced and at once carried by Lord Castlereagh, then Marquis of Londonderry. It was almost the last public act of his evil life. On the 12th of August, in that same year, he executed justice upon himself by

cutting his own throat with a knife. Never lived a more deadly foe of the human race, and especially of the country which gave him birth. He was almost as much hated in England as in Ireland; for he had been a warm supporter of the "Six Acts," and of every measure of despotism. The body of the suicide, instead of being staked at cross roads, was borne in solemn pomp to Westminster Abbey (where the bones of Henry Grattan must have shrunk aside), and the Duke of Wellington and the proudest peers in England were his pall-bearers; but, as the coffin was removed from the hearse to be carried into the Abbey, the multitudes around could not repress a hoot of execration, a long, loud, and hideous yell of horror and hatred. The Tory historian, Alison, reluctantly records that "savage miscreants raised a horrid shout;" but future ages will probably pronounce, that in all the mob of London was no such dreadful miscreant as the man then borne to his grave.

It must not be omitted to state that the Parliament of 1822—in addition to a Coercion Act and *Habeas Corpus* Suspension Act—voted an appropriation of £500,000 for relief of Irish distress, by employing destitute people on public works. It by no means amounted to one-tenth part of the Irish money annually drained from Ireland into England, and applied to English purposes; and even this appropriation was, as usual, corruptly and absurdly expended by English officials, principally upon useless and unproductive works, like the unmeaning obelisk upon Killiney Hill. The British press, and speakers in Parliament at that period, as at a later date, spoke of this appropriation out of the Consolidated Exchequer as so much alms given by England, and assumed immense credit for the generosity of the gift. Under this form and colour the transaction has passed into history. Sir Archibald Alison, of course, glorifies the magnanimity of England upon this occasion: "England no longer remembered the crimes of Ireland—thought only of her sorrows," and so forth. The Marquis Wellesley was Lord-Lieutenant this year; but although invested with terrible powers for the suppression of outrage and insurrection, he is not charged with exercising too savagely the extra legal authority with which the British Parliament was so prompt to clothe him. Indeed, the Marquis, from the conciliatory and mild way in which he spared the suffering people, and from his courtesy towards the Catholic leaders, some of whom he entertained at the Castle, soon became unpopular with the Orange faction. The most

\* possession will not give it without the money. And we know that the food is there; for since this famine has been declared in Parliament, thousands of quarters of corn have been imported every week from Ireland to England."—*Register*, July, 1822. Mr. Cobbett, however, was not placing "the parties" in so embarrassing a position as he imagined, when he defied them to get out of it if they could. It has always been a matter of congratulation with English ministers that, whether the Irish be starving or not, England can still draw from the country her full tribute of grain and cattle. In reading of all these transactions of 1822, one might almost imagine that he is reading of what befell twenty-five years later.

\* Letter of Sir D. Baird to Sir H. Taylor, *Memoirs of Lord Wellesley*. VIII.

† Alison's *History of Europe since 1815*.



prominent Orange agitator was then a certain Sir Harcourt Lees. He was a clergyman by profession, and held preferment in the Church; but occupied himself chiefly in discovering Popish plots for the massacre of Protestants, denouncing, in the newspapers, "O'Connell, the Pope, and the Devil," and sending petitions to Parliament, praying to "put down Popery," and send O'Connell to the Tower. Sir Harcourt was slightly insane; but his morbid visions of Jesuit conspiracies, and wild stories from Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, were well enough suited to excite the ignorant Orangemen of Dublin. These pestilent people soon began to suspect that Lord Wellesley was in league with "O'Connell, the Pope, and the Devil;" and the city resounded with their imprecations. At length, on the night of the 14th of December, their rage broke out in the form of a riot at the theatre. Some ruffians threw a bottle and a piece of wood at the Vice-regal box, but failed to strike the Marquis. Three Dublin tradesmen were arrested, charged with participating in the riot, and indicted. The Grand Jury of Dublin (all Orangemen) ignored the bill. The Attorney-General, Mr. Plunket, then proceeded *ex officio*, and sent them up for trial. As might have been anticipated, the jury would not convict; and, in short, no person was ever punished for the "bottle riot."

The year 1823 is notable for the formation of the "Catholic Association." Its foundations were laid by Mr. O'Connell, in conjunction with Mr. Shiel, then a very young barrister, but already remarkable for a certain kind of polished, figurative, and antithetical rhetoric. These two gentlemen met at the house of a common friend in the Wicklow mountains; "and after exchanging their opinions," says Mr. Shiel, "on the deplorable state to which the Catholic mind had been reduced, and the utter want of organization in the body, it was agreed that they should both sign an address to the Irish Catholics," and inclose it to the principal people of that religion. The result of this procedure was for a time not very encouraging. "A very thin meeting," says Mr. Shiel, "which did not consist of more than twenty individuals, was held at a tavern in Sackville Street; and it was there determined that something should be done." The work, in truth, was difficult. The old alienation between the Catholic peers and the democratic masses still subsisted. Old Lord Fingal, Lord Gormanstown, and others of the highest rank and influence, who would have been glad to accept Emancipation even on the

terms of the *veto*, were somewhat scandalized at the violence with which O'Connell and the famous Dr. Dromgoole repudiated that project of enslaving the Church. Yet a combination of all the sections and elements of the Catholic community, however difficult, was precisely the indispensable condition of effecting any very notable good to the cause. To this, then, O'Connell bent all the energies and resources of his mind. Happily the Earl of Fingal had a son, Lord Killeen, who not only did not share all the prejudices or apprehensions of his father, but longed to throw himself heart and soul into the movement by the side of O'Connell. Lord Killeen had good abilities, and was free from those habits of submission which the Catholic aristocracy had contracted at the period of their extreme depression. His example was soon followed by Lord Gormanstown, a peer of ancient descent, and hitherto of retiring habits, so far as political agitation was concerned. He conceived that the course of the aggressive agitators had the effect only of irritating enmity; and, therefore, had very much secluded himself amongst his woods near Balbriggan. Next came in the Earl of Kinnare; who, though he did not formally join the association (having an aversion to public appearance), sent in the authority of his name and his pecuniary contribution. From this time the union of the aristocracy with the rest of their countrymen was assured. Another and still more powerful element in the confederacy was the Catholic priesthood. The celebrated and very able and energetic Doctor Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, was the first prelate who openly joined the association; his potent pen was devoted to its service; and the whole world was long familiar with the signature "J. K. L." (the initials of his episcopal office), signed to many a vigorous pamphlet and letter. Other bishops and the great body of the clergy soon became members of the association, and the movement which had begun so humbly swelled into a puissant and apparently irresistible torrent of public opinion. O'Connell was at last in his element; and, ably supported by Shiel and Wyse, laboured continually to give a practical character to the meetings, and to bring under calm and well-considered discussion all great questions arising in the State.

In structure, the Catholic Association much resembled all the other political societies instituted by Mr. O'Connell. It consisted of members paying a guinea each year, and of associates paying one shilling. The executive consisted of a



standing committee. The regular meetings were weekly, each Saturday; and the proceedings consisted in the reading of correspondence, perfecting organization, the discussion of public questions which bore any relation to the cause, and deciding on petitions. There was little or no oratorical display at these weekly meetings, the members rather applying themselves to treat subjects of discussion with a moderate and business-like calmness, so as to develop facts and diffuse sound information. Still, the proceedings attracted little attention during the first year. Indeed, Mr. Shiel informs us that "the association in its origin was treated with contempt, not only by its open adversaries, but Catholics themselves spoke of it with derision, and spurned at the walls of mud which their brethren had rapidly thrown up, which were afterwards to become *altæ mania Romæ*." It was only in the course of the following year that Mr. O'Connell instituted the new system of monthly subscriptions of one penny (which he called "Catholic Rent"), when it became evident both to friends and enemies how deep a hold the cause had upon the hearts of the Catholic masses, and how wide-spread was their determination to achieve their liberties. The Ministry began to take some alarm. The Cabinet at that time was extremely Anti-Catholic, Lord Liverpool being still First Lord of the Treasury and Premier; the Duke of Wellington, Master-General of the Ordnance; Lord Eldon (an extreme example of the narrowest bigotry) was Lord-Chancellor; and Mr. Peel (not yet Sir Robert) was the Home Secretary. It is true that Canning, well understood to be a friend of the Catholic claims, was in the Ministry, but his place was that of Foreign Secretary, so that he could have little special influence upon that great question which was now agitating the three kingdoms, and at length disquieting seriously His Majesty's advisers; for, in truth, no phenomenon like this had ever been seen in Ireland before. Within two years after its origin, the penny subscriptions to the rent averaged £500 a week, which represented half-a-million of enrolled associates, and produced a fund quite sufficient to pay the expenses of defending men unjustly accused, to prosecute Orange violators of the law (but this was generally a hopeless enterprise), to pay the expenses of Parliamentary and election agents, and even to afford considerable appropriations for the support of Catholic schools for the poor.

But not even these evidences of imposing numbers and close organization so

much alarmed the Government, as the determined attitude taken by some of the clergy, and the bold writings of Dr. Doyle. He broached doctrines which not only startled the "Protestant Ascendancy," but even affected the nerves of some of the Maynooth professors. In his letter to Mr. Robertson, after speaking of the possibility of a rebellion and a French invasion, he says: "The Minister of England cannot look to the exertions of the Catholic priesthood. They have been ill-treated, and they may yield for a moment to the influence of nature, though it be opposed to grace. The clergy, with a few exceptions, are from the ranks of the people; they inherit their feelings; they are not, as formerly, brought up under despotic governments; and they have imbibed the doctrines of Locke and Paley more deeply than those of Bellarmine, or even of Bossuet, on the Divine right of Kings. They know much more of the principles of the Constitution than they do of passive obedience. *If a rebellion were raging from Carrickfergus to Cape Clear, no sentence of excommunication would ever be fulminated by a Catholic prelate.*"

This announcement produced some consternation; and to counteract the effect of such perilous declarations from a bishop, Lord Wellesley, it was said, applied to Maynooth; and from Maynooth (which receives money from the Treasury) was, in fact, issued a protest,—from which, it was known, the students and Dr. Crotty, the President, dissented altogether. It bore, however, the names of five professors of theology; and the persons who were chiefly instrumental in getting it up were two old French doctors of the Sorbonne, who had belonged, in their own country, to the old *régime*, "and, with a good deal of learning, imported into Ireland a very strong relish for submission." \* The publication of the five professors produced no effect whatever. The people and clergy now saw the most eminent of their prelates in the ranks of the association; and Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, not only joined that body, but sometimes used very energetic language tending to excite his people to be zealous in the cause. "The contemplation of the wrongs of my country," he exclaimed, in his stately cathedral in Marlborough Street—"The contemplation of the wrongs of my country makes my soul burn within me."

It is needless to say that the progress

\* Shiel's Sketches: *Catholic Leaders*. Mr. Shiel gives at full length what he calls 'the Sorbonne manifesto;' and adds, that "it was laughed at by the Irish priesthood."



and power of the Catholic Association excited the Orangemen of Ireland to frenzy. Sir Harcourt Lees saw visions and dreamed dreams; and many petitions were sent to Parliament "to put down Popery," and save the Protestant State from O'Connell, the Pope, and the Devil. Ministers, indeed, began to perceive that they must yield; and that Emancipation could not be far off. It had in its favour not only the entire Catholic population of Ireland, but also, in England, a small but very wealthy and influential group of nobles and gentry of that ancient faith, who, of course, expected their own restoration to civil rights from the success of the movement then in such rapid progress. The Dissenting population of the North of Ireland, it must be said to their credit, were favourable to the claims of the Catholics, although their grandfathers had gladly submitted to the Test and Corporation Acts, which excluded Nonconformists from most offices, rather than make common cause with their fellow-sufferers, the Catholics, to shake off the yoke of the Ascendancy. O'Connell had often appealed to them to give him their moral aid in his struggle; representing to them that the great reform he sought was a breaking down of *all* barriers of exclusion under pretext of men's religious belief; that if the last penal laws which oppressed the Catholics were dashed to the earth, the last penal laws which injured and insulted Dissenters must come down along with them; and if the Catholics and Nonconformists of Ireland were once united in the assertion of their rights, there would soon be an end of tithes, and church-rates, and ministers' money, and every other paltry imposition which bolstered up the "Ascendancy." Language like this had its effect. A large proportion—and that the most educated and enlightened—of the Presbyterians gave their entire sympathy to the Catholic movement; and if but few amongst them aided it actively, they at least remained passive, and left all the fanatical howling—all the pious imprecations, and vaticinations of wrath to come—to the Orange Grand-Masters, and raving rectors and curates.

But amongst the forces which were now giving impetus to the Catholic cause must also be classed the English Reformers, and their powerful organs of the press. Indeed, during this whole controversy, nothing was more observable than the great literary superiority of the advocates of the Catholics, and the utter nullity of anything which was attempted on the other side, in the shape either of argu-

ment or satire. Most of the wisest and wittiest pens of the two islands were wielded in favour of Emancipation. Trenchant reasoning from Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh Review*—the piquant humour of Sidney Smith, in "Peter Plymley's Letters"—the brawny might of William Cobbett, who, wherever tyranny and intolerance showed their head, smote it amain with his knotted club—the exquisite satire of Moore, like a rapier of the finest edge, that cut clean and drew blood, and often with the lightest and most graceful movement, as if in play, searched the very vitals of some villain in high places, and made him howl—Shiel's brilliant shafts of wit, shot from the *New Monthly Magazine*;—all these were aimed at the monster called Protestant Ascendancy in Church and State, and there was nothing of the kind to oppose them; nothing but the raving letters of Sir Harcourt Lees and his friends, or the bitter spite of the Tories in *Blackwood*, and *Fraser*, and the *Quarterly*.

However, if the Government had but little to say for itself in the literary way, it could still produce Acts of Parliament and compose indictments. Early in 1825, Mr. Goulburn, then Secretary for Ireland, brought into Parliament and carried through both Houses a bill for suppression of "Unlawful Associations in Ireland." This law was of course aimed against the existing Catholic Association, which was not at all "unlawful." Immediately when it passed, the association, under the legal advice of O'Connell, dissolved itself. It was no longer in existence. The law was satisfied; and then immediately constituted itself again, under the title of the New Catholic Association. This was a usual expedient of O'Connell through his long series of agitations, in avoiding the penalties of penal enactments. He boasted that he could "drive a coach-and-six through an Act of Parliament;" and the practice of evading or practically annulling such tyrannous laws cannot certainly be condemned, seeing that the Irish people would at any time have been justified if they had the needful force) in openly breaking, defying, and resisting them. This law against the Catholic Association was never, in fact, enforced, nor any enforcement attempted: and it continued its proceedings precisely as before, until Emancipation was secure.

But while the Government thus made a show of coercion on the one hand, they had on the other prepared a bill for granting the Catholic claims in a certain stinted and very guarded manner. And the bill



for this purpose, which happily never became law, is, indeed, an instructive sample of British statesmanship with respect to Irish affairs. It proposed to admit Catholics both in England and in Ireland to Parliament, and to Municipal Corporations, but provided for Ireland two very important safeguards for the perpetuation of English supremacy in that island. In the first place, the entire class of county voters having freeholds worth forty shillings were to be disfranchised. These made the great bulk of the rural voters. The other measure was to pension the Catholic clergy. The bill was prepared under the inspiration of Sir Robert Peel. This shrewd statesman had perceived when in Ireland that the large increase of the *Regium Donum* to Presbyterian ministers had had the effect of quieting down the republican aspirations and quelling the "French principles" which had made those clergymen nearly all rebels in 1798; and that whatever influence they exercised over their flocks was now exerted in favour of "loyalty"—that is, of British dominion. And as for the Catholic clergy, we have in fact seen that the only members of that body who came to the rescue of British loyalty, against Dr. Doyle's audacious declaration, were five professors of an institution endowed by the State. He prudently calculated that to salary them all would buy them away from their people, and give England an efficient corps of clerical detectives in the interests of the British Government. Accordingly, this bill provided that they were to be paid out of the Treasury at the rate of £1,000 to each bishop, £300 to a dean, £200 to a parish priest, and £60 to a curate. It was a scale somewhat in proportion to the tariff of rewards which had been offered for the discovery of Catholic clergymen, and which had kept the "priest-hunters" in good business for many years. It may be thought that times had greatly altered for the better; yet the *intention* in the latter case was quite as deadly hostile to the Irish people and their clergy as it had been in the former. And so they felt it; for both priests and people were resolutely opposed to this bribe, and most desirous for the defeat of the bill. It was defeated. After passing the Lower House it encountered most infuriated opposition in the Lords; and the Duke of York made a speech of the intensest malignity, which had the more serious effect, as he was heir presumptive to the Crown of England. He declared in the most solemn manner that he never would consent to allow the claims of the

Catholics—"never, so help him God!" On the second reading in the House of Lords the bill was defeated.

There was, at this time in London a very imposing deputation of Irish Catholics. O'Connell and Shiel had been requested by the Catholic Association to go over and demand to be heard at the bar of the House of Commons against the bill for suppression of the "Unlawful Associations in Ireland." The motion that they should be heard was made by Mr. Brougham, but was rejected, and that part of their mission failed. Several distinguished gentlemen had been associated with the deputation—amongst others, Mr. O'Gorman and Sir Thomas Esmonde. They were very warmly welcomed and courteously entertained by many leading Whigs: Brougham, Burdett, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Duke of Sussex, the "Liberal" member of the Royal family.

An incident occurred during the discussion upon Mr. Brougham's motion to hear O'Connell and Shiel at the bar, which gave occasion to one of the very few imprudent things which Peel committed in his Parliamentary life. He was opposing the motion with much vehemence, and denouncing the association as a treasonable body. Alluding to a friendly address which it had presented to the venerable patriot Archibald Hamilton Rowan, "he became heated with victory," says Mr. Shiel, "and, cheered as he was repeatedly by his multitudinous partizans, turned suddenly towards the part of the House where the deputies were seated, and looking triumphantly at Mr. O'Connell, with whom he forgot for a moment that he had been once engaged in a personal quarrel, shook his hand with scornful exultation, and asked whether the House required any better evidence than the address of the association '*to an attainted traitor!*'" This language was held to be in very bad taste; and Mr. Brougham made a fierce and damaging reply. The incident, however, showed in very strong light the bitter feeling of Sir Robert Peel towards the Catholics.

Before the deputation quitted London, the other bill for Emancipation, with payment of the clergy and disfranchisement of forty-shilling freeholders, was pending. These two conditions were called the "wings" of the bill; and the deputies, especially Mr. O'Connell, had much conversation with leading Whig politicians upon the terms of the proposed measure, and upon the way in which it might probably be received in Ireland as a final



settlement. Those Whig politicians were naturally desirous that the measure should pass, wings and all, for they cared nothing about the independence of the Church or the rights of electors. What they thought of was that some Irish Catholic members coming into Parliament would be an accession of force to their party, and might carry them into office. Mr. O'Connell did not then probably so fully know, as he afterwards came to know, that British Whigs regard all Irish questions solely with a view to the interests of the Whig party. The courtesies also, and the persuasive phraseology of those courtly "Liberals," and of the English Catholics, who were all for the bill, certainly imposed somewhat upon O'Connell's mind, insomuch that he is known to have signified to some principal Whig statesmen his willingness to take the bill as it stood, with the two offensive "wings." The fortunate loss of the measure in the House of Lords prevented any evil consequences arising from this unaccountable weakness; and when the deputation returned to Ireland, and found what was the state of feeling amongst the Catholics; and when O'Connell found that his complying disposition was very likely to injure his popularity and his power for good, he very promptly and frankly retracted, and took his position again with his countrymen. It had been well, indeed, if he had firmly held his ground against both those wings to the last.

## CHAPTER XIX.

1825—1829.

Action of the Catholic Association—Waterford Election—Louth Election—Change of Ministry—Canning Premier—Lord Anglesea Viceroy—The "New Reformation"—Pope and Maguire—Death of Canning—Goderich Cabinet—Catholic Petition for Repeal of Test and Corporation Acts—Acts Repealed—Clare Election—O'Connell Returned—Its Results—Suppression of Catholic Association—Peel and Wellington Prepare Catholic Relief Bill—Rage of the Bigots—Reluctance of the King—O'Connell at the Bar of the House—Passage of the Emancipation Act—Disfranchisement of the Forty-Shilling Freeholders—Abstract of the Relief Act—The New Oath—Meaning and Spirit of the Relief Act.

THE Catholic Association continued its operations and extended its organization with even greater vigour and success than before. It had a machinery which extended not only into every county, but into every parish. Its funds were given to employ lawyers to protect the people in cases of extreme oppression; and in

such cases as the wrecking of a chapel, or an Orange riot in the North—cases which the magistrates at petty and quarter-sessions had been in the habit of treating upon the general principle that Papists had no rights which Protestants were bound to respect—their worships were now sometimes thunderstruck by the apparition of clever barristers or attorneys from Dublin, who not only knew more law than the whole bench of justices, but were attended by newspaper reporters, sure to publish abroad to the world any too outrageous instance of magisterial partizanship. But the machinery of the Association, both central and provincial, was capable of being employed with more striking effect in the elections of representatives in Parliament, and its efficiency began to be proved in the general election of 1826. It was resolved in the Association that all its efforts should be concentrated upon favouring the return of certain liberal Protestants (seeing that Catholics were not eligible) for some counties which had been up to that time controlled absolutely by a few great families of the old colonial aristocracy. The Beresfords, for example, had long represented Waterford in person of some member of their family. The idea of opposing the Beresford interest in that county seemed the wildest dream; and the Beresford, who was Marquis of Waterford, naturally thought that he did not more clearly own the demesne of Curraghmore than he owned the representation of his county. At the election of 1826, Lord George Beresford was boldly opposed by Mr. Villiers Stuart, another large proprietor of the county, and a friend to the Catholic claims. The latter was supported by the parochial organizers and by the Catholic clergy, and won his election, to the intense mortification of the house of Curraghmore, and perfect consternation of the whole Protestant interest.

While society in Dublin was much agitated by the progress of this contest in the South, news arrived in that city of a still more stirring nature. Louth County was, in like manner, held to be an appanage of the two noble houses of Foster and Jocelyn. Their titles were Oriel and Roden. Lord Oriel was that John Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons at the time of the Union, with whom this history has already had much to do—all his life a high placeholder, and bitter opponent of the Catholics. The politician of the family was now John Leslie Foster, who had long sat in Parliament as one of the members for the county, and consistently on every



occasion resisted the slightest concession to the Catholics. The Jocelyns had as their nominee for the other seat Mr. Fortescue, a politician of the same deep Orange hue. At the election in 1826 there presented himself to the people to ask their suffrages a Mr. Dawson, a retired barrister of some fortune, who was favourable to the enfranchisement of six millions of his countrymen. He was attended to the polls by immense multitudes of the worthy forty-shilling freeholders, who marched with him into Dundalk with green banners flying in the wind. The contest was close; for the influence of the great landlords was nearly irresistible, unless at mortal peril. It needed all the energy of the local managers of the Association to bring up the voters and get them to defy those potent despots. Mr. Shiel went down from Dublin as counsel for Dawson. In short, at the close of the poll, Dawson was declared duly elected; Mr. Foster was the second member; and Fortescue, nominee of Lord Roden, stood defeated.

Some few other successes of a similar character showed what the Association could do. The effect of such events upon the public mind in England was very great. As for the "Ascendancy" faction in Ireland, it was as usual in a foam of rage. The great family interests—the mighty Orange houses which had been long a rock and strong tower to Protestant monopoly and religion—were now, as it seemed, to be assailed, not by sap or mine, but by open storm and escalade.

The Protestant mind of that day could not help believing that there was some Jesuit conspiracy at work in this matter, and that the Waterford election was won virtually by the Pope of Rome. Sir Harcourt Lees demanded of Parliament whether his vaticinations would be at length listened to—Popery "put down," and O'Connell sent to the Tower.

Early in the first session of the new Parliament Lord Liverpool, the Premier, was struck with paralysis. He was a helpless and timorous creature, afraid to read his letters in the morning, lest they should bring news of an insurrection in some part of the country; and his only idea of government was to disturb nothing, to reform nothing (sufficient unto the day being the evil thereof), and only praying that all mankind might remain precisely as it was for his day. In short, he was a "Conservative" of the stupidest sort.\*

\* His order of Conservatism is admirably characterized by Paul Louis Courier, who, speaking of one of Lord Liverpool's character, said: "If he had been present on the morning of the creation, he would have cried: '*Mon Dieu! conservons le chaos!*'"

On his death, which followed very soon, Mr. Canning, who had been Foreign Secretary in his Administration, was sent for by the King, and received his commands to form a Cabinet. But Mr. Canning, only a month before, had made a powerful speech in favour of Catholic Emancipation; the King, therefore, must have known that in making this statesman his Prime Minister, he was taking an almost irrevocable step towards that clearly inevitable consummation. Accordingly, Sir Robert Peel, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Eldon, and other Tory members of the outgoing Cabinet, refused to serve with Mr. Canning, who thereupon formed a Ministry which was generally in favour of concession. Lord Wellesley was succeeded in the Viceroyalty of Ireland by the Marquis of Anglesea, formerly Earl of Uxbridge—a very brilliant cavalry officer, but not much of a statesman. The Chief Secretary was Lord Francis Leveson Gower.

When Lord Anglesea arrived in Ireland he found the Ascendancy faction in high excitement. The very Orangemen began to perceive the ominous signs of the times. They were making preparations to celebrate with great pomp the grand Orange anniversary of the 12th of July, being resolved, if they could not much longer trample on their fellow-countrymen, to insult them to the last. As the time approached, however, Lord Anglesea prohibited by proclamation the customary procession in Dublin, and the garlanding with Orange lilies the statue of King William in College Green. In Ulster, however, the anniversary was celebrated with even more than the usual show of insolent triumph. In every town and village the brethren assembled in great numbers, marched from town to town, all flaunting with purple and orange sashes, generally halting in the midst of districts inhabited by Catholics, firing a volley over their houses, and playing "The Protestant Boys," and "Croppies Lie Down."

The prohibition of the Dublin procession, and other alarming signs of an approaching compromise with Jezebel—for such was held to be the meaning of the threatened admission of Papists to Parliament and the Corporations—aroused all the "No-Popery" animosities of their hereditary oppressors, and the clerical agitators projected a "New Reformation." If the Catholics could but be convinced of their idolatry and superstition (which seemed so manifest to those clerical persons), it was thought that they could no longer persist in their audacious pretensions. In gene-



ral, this new scheme of proselytism was carried on by mere ribald abuse of everything held sacred in the ancient religion, and by repeating the old stories out of Fox's *Martyrs*; but certain of the new reformers challenged public discussion with the most learned Catholic theologians in every diocese, and at first some of these challenges were promptly met by Catholic clergymen, who thought on their side that their religion could lose nothing, and might gain much by public exposition and defence of its tenets. Several oral discussions took place accordingly, of which the most notable was that between a Rev. Mr. Pope, an English clergyman, and Father Maguire, a parish priest of Leitrim County. The bold acceptance of the challenge by "Father Tom" was thought by his own partizans rather unfortunate, as he had never debated in public, though known to be a learned theologian, while Mr. Pope was a practised controversialist. The discussion was to take place in Dublin, each champion to defend three articles of his own, and assail three of his adversary's faith. The occasion excited intense interest. Not only the public room where the meeting took place, but all Sackville Street, was thronged with eager sympathizers. As the two disputants argued within the building, thousands of minor "oral discussions" were taking place on the streets, and the talk of Dublin carmen was of two sacraments and of seven. This scene lasted many days. The debate was carried on with sufficient courtesy. Father Maguire proved himself a master of theological learning, and Mr. Pope of controversial declamation; and the affair ended as might have been expected—that is, Catholics were convinced that Mr. Maguire had demolished the Protestant religion, and Protestants were satisfied that Mr. Pope had not left Popery a leg to stand on. Nobody was converted on either side.

Many other similar discussions, in which laymen sometimes bore a part, raged in each province of the island, and generally rather inflamed intolerance than advanced any good cause. The Right Rev. Dr. Doyle disapproved of them, and soon interdicted the clergy of his diocese from engaging in them. So did the Archbishop of Armagh, and then the other bishops. Soon not a priest could be found to accept a challenge, and their opponents took this as a plain proof that the Catholic religion was afraid of the light of day. They eagerly pressed their invitations, but in vain. They urgently offered to their Catholic friends to prove

the mass a plain sacrifice to idols, and purgatory a lamentable infringement on the prerogatives of hell. The Catholic priests would no longer strip for this polemical prize-ring, although still ready and willing to expound their faith by the old methods of theological argument.

The year 1827 was remarkable for the first great example of the emigrant Irish in every foreign country, and in every colony, taking an active part in the struggle for liberty of their friends at home. And the sympathy and substantial aid were not confined to Irishmen alone, nor even to Catholics alone. The bold attitude of O'Connell; the mighty power he had created and directed; the vigour and wisdom of that agitation now so evidently shaking the deep-rooted and broad-based structure of the British Empire, attracted the admiration of the world. The powerful French press occupied itself warmly in the struggle; and from French Catholics, as well as from Americans of all religions, came addresses and subscriptions to the Catholic Association. Multitudinous meetings of "Friends of Ireland" were held in all considerable American cities; and a large part of the business of the Association began to be reading foreign correspondence, and receiving addresses from not only France and America, but from various German States, from Italy, from Spain, even from British India. All these things, while they violently irritated the national pride of the English, suggested to them at the same time the impossibility of continued resistance in so very bad a cause.

Mr. Canning died in August, after a very short tenure of office. He had to contend with a compact and very acrimonious opposition, consisting not only of the Tories, but of the aristocratic party of the old Whigs, headed by Lord Grey—a party which was jealous of Canning, because it sincerely believed him an interloper upon the prescriptive right of a few great families to govern the country.\*

But the head and the heart of this

\* Canning was a man of strong passions and high spirit, with great talent for satire, and of course had made many enemies—and without enemies no man is entitled to have friends. He had been a Tory, too, and had written pungent squibs in the *Anti-Jacobin* against "French principles." For example, the very clever satire of the *Needy Knife-Grinder*. In one of these *jeux d'esprit*, he had contrasted the statesman-like qualities of certain Tory lords with

"—— The temper of Grey,  
And Treasurer Sheridan's promise to pay."

It was generally believed that Lord Grey did not forget this, and that it contributed very much to envenom his opposition to Canning's Ministry.



venomous opposition was Sir Robert Peel, who saw that Canning was destined, if his Government lasted, to carry the great measure of Catholic Emancipation, and who was determined, if possible, to supersede him, and carry that inevitable measure himself—a policy not unfamiliar to this prudent statesman, which he afterwards pursued in the other signal case of the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Mr. Canning, too, was in failing health, and had lost most of the original energy of his nature. Peel therefore “hounded him to death,” as Lord George Bentinck long afterwards bitterly declared in Parliament.

Mr. Canning was succeeded by Lord Goderich, a statesman of little talent or influence, who did not succeed in forming a ministry which could hold together; and in January, 1823, this feeble administration gave place to the Duke of Wellington as Premier Minister, and Sir Robert Peel as Secretary for the Home Department—both of them avowed and inveterate enemies of the liberties of Catholics. The Duke, also, was still sincerely and consistently resolute to refuse all concession; while his prudent colleague had already determined to be converted at the right moment, and to have the credit of effecting a revolution which he saw to be inevitable. In this new Cabinet was Lord Palmerston—a man who never cared for Whig or Tory, Catholic or Protestant, or the rights or wrongs of any class, sect, or nation, but was always ready to bear a hand, and that efficiently, in the current events which were for the time being the order of the day.

On the opening of the session of 1828, the Catholic Association was prepared with a petition, signed by 800,000 Catholics, praying, not for any rights of their own, or relief for themselves, but for repeal of the Test Act and Corporation Act, which had excluded Protestant Dissenters from office for a century and a half. This idea was O’Connell’s; but the petition, as he long afterwards delighted to proclaim, was drawn up by the hand of Father L’Estrange, a Carmelite friar. This was an incident well calculated to produce a fine dramatic effect—the proscribed and oppressed Catholics petitioning for the rights of the much *less* proscribed and oppressed Nonconformists! But it is fair to add that many petitions poured in this session from Protestants of all sects in favour of the Catholic claims, so that there was at least an appearance of mutual good-will, and a universal aspiration towards liberty, equality, and

fraternity. The picture was somewhat marred, however, by multitudes of petitions vehemently deprecating all concession to Catholics; and these latter came from the most influential quarters in the three kingdoms of Ireland, England, and Scotland. The British Universities were especially stirred by apprehension and alarm for the Protestant interest; and the Corporations, particularly that of Dublin, felt that all was lost if a man of seven sacraments became alderman or town councillor.

In that session the Test Act and Corporation Act were in fact repealed. The measure was introduced by Lord John Russell, a statesman who then and always professed “Liberal” principles, and aspired to lead the party of what is called “Progress;” but being essentially narrow-minded, has often shown himself actuated by the blindest bigotry and intolerance. His measure was carried, chiefly on account of the languid opposition made to it by Sir Robert Peel, who was then in a *transition* state, and was making up his mind to be converted himself to Liberal principles, and even to snatch from Lord John Russell and the Whigs the credit of carrying the grand Whig measure of that age. The Act repealing the Test and Corporation Acts became law in April; and a few weeks after, on the secession of several members from the Cabinet, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, then member for Clare County, was brought in to fill a vacancy in the administration as President of the Board of Trade. This vacated his seat for Clare until he should be re-elected; and he immediately issued his address to the Clare electors, nothing doubting that he would be at once replaced in his seat, having large influence in the county, and most of the larger landed proprietors being his political and personal friends. Mr. Fitzgerald was a highly honourable and liberal gentleman, and a warm friend to Catholic Emancipation. He was, moreover, the son of that steady Anti-Union patriot, Mr. Prime-Sergeant Fitzgerald, who had spoken at the bar meeting against the Union, and had been thereupon degraded from his office by the Government. He was, therefore, in some sort, a martyr to patriotism; and his son had good reason to count not only on his own possessions and influence in his county, but also on his personal merit and the traditions of his family, for a warm support in Clare.

The celebrated Clare election followed—one of the most momentous transactions in the modern history of Ireland, and, indeed, of the other island also. It was



no merely local contest for one seat in Parliament; it was the making up of a decisive issue between the millions of oppressed Catholics and that potent and insolent "Ascendancy," which had so long trampled upon them in their own land.

At first, however, it was not foreseen what a sharp turning-point this Clare election was destined to prove in history. The Catholics had passed a resolution at one of their aggregate meetings to oppose the election of every candidate who should not pledge himself against the Duke of Wellington's administration. Now, here was a proven friend to those Catholics, who had always voted in their favour, actually a member of that administration, and seeking election at the hands of an Irish constituency. The question was, Should that worthy gentleman be opposed by the whole power of the Association? And whom could they hope to put in his place who would be a better friend to them than Vesey Fitzgerald? An incident now occurred which gave much additional importance to this question. Lord John Russell, charmed with his own success in repealing the Test and Corporation Acts, swelling with self-confidence, as usual, and never doubting that he was about to be the great "Liberal" leader, wrote a letter to Mr. O'Connell, suggesting that the conduct of the Duke of Wellington in the case of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, had been so fair and noble as to entitle his Grace to the gratitude of "Liberals;" and that they, the said Liberals, "would consider the reversal of the resolution which had been passed against his Government as evidence of the interest which the Irish people felt, not only in the great question peculiarly applicable to that country, but in the assertion of religious freedom throughout the *empire*." \* That is to say, the Whig party of the "empire" would take it very kind if Mr. O'Connell and the Catholic Association would put aside the consideration of their own country and their own rights, and use their power so as to benefit that *party*. This resembles extremely the many other occasions on which the Whigs of the "empire" have endeavoured to stifle Irish questions, and turn Irish organizations for national purposes to the service of an English faction, which always courted the Catholics when out of office, and always spurned and oppressed them when in power.

And Mr. O'Connell's greatest weakness (as we have seen in the last chapter), both then and since, was his too credulous

reliance upon the fair professions of that treacherous party, which he had so often occasion to describe as "the base, brutal, and bloody Whigs." On the present occasion, Mr. O'Connell can scarcely be censured for lending an ear to the suggestion of the Whig—that Mr. Fitzgerald's election should go unopposed; for O'Connell himself did not yet foresee what a potent engine this Clare election would become in his hands. Therefore he proposed, in the Association, that the resolution should be suspended.

But O'Connell did not fully appreciate how deeply his countrymen abhorred both Wellington and Peel, of both of whom, in the capacity of Chief Secretary, Ireland had bitter experience. His motion was vehemently and successfully opposed. After some debate, the original resolution was left standing; and the Association remained committed to oppose the return of Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald. Mr. O'Connell had reason to rejoice in his failure to rescind that resolution.

Clare, then, was to be contested; and the next question was, Who was to be put forward against Fitzgerald? The Association pitched upon Major MacNamara, one of the proprietors of the county—a Protestant, of course, but descended of ancient Irish stock, very friendly to the Catholics; a man of but little weight of character, whose principal care and ambition seem to have been to dress and wig himself after the pattern of George IV., whom he personally resembled; for the rest, a good landlord, an excellent magistrate, and protector of the poor and oppressed. But this personage, though a friend to his Catholic countrymen, was still more a friend, as it turned out, to his neighbour Vesey Fitzgerald. He allowed many days to elapse without sending an answer to the Association; and as Clare was at a great distance from Dublin, in those days of slow travelling, much anxious delay was thus created. Doubts and rumours began to prevail, not only as to the acceptance of the candidacy, but as to the disposition of the priests of Clare to act warmly with the Association against so estimable and popular a gentleman. Mr. O'Gorman Mahon and Mr. Steele were sent post to Clare, to inquire into the dispositions of priests and people, and to bring an answer, if possible, from Major MacNamara. O'Gorman Mahon came back in two days. The Major's family lay under such obligations to Mr. Fitzgerald that he could not think of opposing him. Meanwhile the "Ascendancy" party, as well as the Liberal Protestants of Clare, were actively engaged

\* See Shiel's *Sketches*—"The Clare Election."



in working for the candidate already in the field; and boasting that no gentleman in the county would stoop so low as to accept the patronage of the Catholic Association. Those gentlemen of the county were soon to receive a lesson.

There was earnest consultation one night at O'Connell's house in Merrion Square. Next day Dublin City was startled, and soon all Ireland was aroused, by an address from *O'Connell himself* to the electors of Clare, soliciting their suffrages, affirming that he was qualified to be elected and to serve them in Parliament, although he would never take the oath (that the mass is idolatrous), "for," continued he, "the authority which created those oaths (the Parliament) can abrogate them; and I entertain *a confident hope* that if you elect me, the most bigoted of our enemies *will see the necessity* of removing from the chosen representative of the people an obstacle which would prevent him from doing his duty to his King and to his country." At last all the world, friends and foes, saw in one moment what was to be the meaning of the Clare election.

Several members of the Association were at once sent down to Clare in order to excite the people, and prepare them for the great event; also to arouse the spirit of the priests, and induce them to use their influence with the tenantry. The great family "interests"—the O'Briens, the Vandeleurs, the Fitzgeralds, the Mac-Namaras—had, as they thought, organized and drilled their numerous tenantry into proper discipline. They considered the people who lived on their estates almost in the light of serfs; and it was a principle then in Ireland, that if any gentleman interfered with another's tenants, by canvassing them, in order to induce them to vote against their landlords, the interference was to be resented as a personal affront. But a power was now moving these masses on which those respectable gentlemen had not calculated—the profound and sweeping passion of a highly impulsive and imaginative people, thoroughly aroused by every feeling that could appeal either to their manhood or their religious enthusiasm—stimulated by the exhortations of priests whom they loved, and inspired by the name and renown of the redoubtable champion who promised to deliver them. All this together made up such a mass of concentrated power, as was sure to test severely the discipline of the great estates, and the traditionary deference paid by tenants to their landlords.

Mr. Steele and O'Gorman Mahon under-

took to canvas the county; and Steele intimated beforehand his readiness to fight any landlord who should feel himself aggrieved by interference with his tenants. Then they traversed the county, making the most earnest and impetuous appeals to the people; addressing them at all hours and in all places—in the chapels after mass, on the hill-sides, in the village markets, by day and by night, until it was clear that the generous and gallant people were fully resolved to brave, this one good time, the utmost vengeance of landlord wrath, and carry the "Man of the People" triumphantly to the door of Parliament.

The famous Father Maguire travelled all the way from Leitrim that he might help to swell the excitement. John Lawless (or, as he was usually named, Honest Jack Lawless) was then editor of a newspaper in Belfast, called the *Irishman*. He left his newspaper to other hands, and hurried to Clare, to put his fiery leading articles into the form of fiery speeches. The town of Ennis, which had a population of eight thousand, contained thirty thousand human beings on the day when O'Connell's green carriage was expected in that place. Green flags waved from the windows; priests and agitators addressed multitudes from a balcony or a flight of steps; and the excitement of expectation was at its highest. Yet there was not the slightest appearance of turbulence or disorder. On the contrary, throughout all the exciting canvas, and still more exciting days of the actual poll, old family feuds were suspended, or terminated for ever. There was no drunkenness, no angry language, and no man ventured (so strong was public opinion) to raise a hand against another upon any provocation. O'Connell at length appeared, with two or three friends; and there was one continuous shout from thirty thousand throats. Women cried and laughed; strangers, who had never seen one another, wrung each other's hands; and from every window ladies (Mr. Shiel says, "of great beauty") waved hands and handkerchiefs. No wonder that such a tempest of patriotic zeal whirled away Mr. Fitzgerald's own tenants out of the hands of their marshalling bailiffs; nor that one wave of O'Connell's arm left Mr. Vandeleur deserted by his whole army of freeholders. Sir Edward O'Brien's feudal pride was mortally hurt by the defection of his people, and he shed tears of vexation; but his son, William Smith O'Brien, then member for Ennis, though his family pride may have been hurt by such a result, was not inconsolable, being in-



deed a contributor to the "Catholic Rent," and one who, at all times, valued justice and fair dealing more highly than the broad acres and high towers of Drumoland.

The details of an election contest, even that of Clare in 1828, need not be related at length. Sir Edward O'Brien proposed Mr. Fitzgerald, who was seconded by Sir Augustus Fitzgerald. O'Connell was proposed by O'Gorman Mahon and Mr. Steele, both proprietors in the county. The speeches were made; the poll proceeded; and at its close the numbers stood, for O'Connell, two thousand and fifty-seven; for Fitzgerald, one thousand and seventy-five. After an argument before the assessor, Mr. Keating, in which it was contended that a Catholic could not be legally returned, the objection was overruled on the ground that it rested with the Parliament itself, on the oath being tendered and refused, to exclude a representative, and O'Connell was proclaimed duly elected.

It is somewhat difficult at this day fully to comprehend the profound impression which this event produced throughout Ireland, as well as in the other island. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, though deeply mortified, took his defeat with a gentlemanlike calmness; but the great proprietors of Clare County, who had supported him, could not conceal their ominous apprehensions. "Where is all this to end?" was a question frequently put in his presence; to which he replied only by looks of gloom and sorrow. In fact, the worthy Protestant "Liberals," disciples and followers of Grattan and Ponsonby, had accustomed themselves to regard the Catholic claims as their affair—they were the Parliamentary patrons of the Irish Catholics, and had never dreamed of the possibility of their clients taking the case into their own hands; not only throwing off all dependence upon them, but even flinging aside so decisively one of the most distinguished of their advocates, and coming in their proper person to thunder at the doors of Parliament. Still more fearful and terrible to them was the example of independence now set by the voting tenantry; the hereditary family "interests" were no longer omnipotent; and the end of the world seemed at hand. The exultation of the Catholic people of Ireland was unbounded. O'Connell travelled back to Dublin in the midst of one continued triumphal procession. Mr. Lawless, the Belfast editor, was escorted on his return to Belfast by enormous multitudes of the peasantry. Through the plains of Meath they passed in peaceable

triumph, and through the southern part of Monaghan; but in this region the Orangemen were strong, armed, resolute, and infuriated; and a vast concourse of armed Protestants, excited by the harangues of their preachers, and prayerfully determined to resist this triumph of "Jezebel," at least in *their* county, were assembled at Ballybay, and showed a stern purpose of opposing the passage of Mr. Lawless and his followers. It needed all the exertions of the Catholic clergy, and the friendly expostulations of General Thornton, military commandant of the district, to prevent a collision, and induce the multitudinous escort of Mr. Lawless to disperse and go to their homes. For a week or two there were serious apprehensions of collision, and of civil war; and large numbers of troops were hastily sent over from England. It was even formally proposed in the Catholic Association that a run should be made on the banks, with a view of disorganizing society and opening the way for armed revolution; but these counsels were rejected.

The actual results of this election are well known, and may be shortly summarized. The Duke of Wellington, who had a few months before declared that "he could not comprehend the possibility of placing Roman Catholics in a *Protestant* Legislature with any kind of safety, as his personal knowledge told him that no King, however Catholic, could govern his Catholic subjects without the aid of the Pope;" this Duke, the consistent and conscientious opponent of Catholic liberties, and who had taken office expressly to defeat their claims, became suddenly converted, and felt that the choice lay between Catholic Emancipation and civil war. As for Sir Robert Peel, he had already divined the course of events—his policy was clear; and his conscience presented no serious difficulty. Lord Anglesea, the Lord-Lieutenant, though he had come over to Ireland with no friendly feeling towards the Catholics, had greatly altered his views, and now made no secret of his opinion that the time was come to settle the vexed question in the only way it could be settled—for which expression of opinion he was summarily removed from his government.

The Parliament met in February, 1829. The King's speech, prepared no doubt by Peel, recommended the suppression of the Catholic Association, *and* the subsequent consideration of Catholic disabilities, with a view to their adjustment and removal. As for the Catholic Association, there could be no difficulty about that. It had done its work; and, not waiting for the



law to suppress it, dissolved itself at once—that is, nominally, for substantially the organization still subsisted, and could easily resume its usual business in case of necessity.

It was Sir Robert Peel who, on the 5th of March, moved for a Committee of the whole House, “for consideration of the civil disabilities of His Majesty’s Roman Catholic subjects;” and the motion was carried, after a warm debate, by a large majority.

And now arose the most tremendous clamour of alarmed Protestantism that had been heard in the three kingdoms since the days of James II.—the last King who had ever dreamed of placing Catholics and Protestants on something like an approach to equality. Multitudinous petitions—not only from Irish Protestants but from Scottish Presbyteries, from English Universities, from corporations of British towns, from private individuals—came pouring into Parliament, praying that the great and noble Protestant State of England should not be handed over as a prey to the Jesuits, the Inquisitors, and the *Propaganda*. Never was such a jumble of various topics, sacred and profane, as in those petitions; vested interests—idolatry of the mass—principles of the Hanoverian succession—the Inquisition—eternal privileges of Protestant tailors or Protestant lightermen—our holy religion—French principles—tithes—and the beast of the Apocalypse—all were urged with vehement eloquence upon the enlightened legislators of Britain.

What may seem strange, one has to admit that a great number of these frightened petitioners were truly sincere and conscientious. The amiable Dr. Jebb, Protestant Bishop of Limerick, for example, writes an earnest letter to Sir Robert Peel, on the 11th of February, 1829 (so soon as he saw the course that matters were taking), and says to him:—“Infinitely more difficulties and dangers will attach to concession than to uncompromising resistance. . . . In defence of all that is dear to British Protestants, I am cheerfully prepared, if necessary, as many of my order have formerly done, to lay down life itself.” On the other hand, the good Dr. Doyle, Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, had uttered this prayer for O’Connell when he started for the contest in Clare:—“May the God of truth and justice protect and prosper you!” What very different, what very opposite ideas of truth and justice had these two excellent prelates!

Sir Robert Peel, however, had taken his part—the Catholics were to be emanci-

pated; and by *him*. But the King would not yield, save at the last extremity. To assent to an act of justice seemed to George IV. like the loss of his dearest heart’s blood. He endeavoured even to get rid of the Wellington Cabinet, and to form a new Ministry which would pledge itself *not* to do justice. But in this he failed. Sir Robert Peel tells us:—“At a late hour on the evening of the 4th of March, the King wrote a letter to the Duke of Wellington, informing him that His Majesty anticipated so much difficulty in the attempt to form another administration, that he could not dispense with our services; that he must, therefore, desire us to withdraw our resignation; and that we were at liberty to proceed with the measures of which notice had been given in Parliament.”\*

Mr. O’Connell, who had arrived in London to claim his seat for Clare, *as a Catholic*, finding that there was now a Government pledged to Emancipation, having *carte blanche* for that purpose, decided not to present himself for the present, lest it should embarrass the administration.

The Emancipation Act was forthwith introduced. It was prepared by Sir Robert Peel. It contained neither the provision for *veto* nor that for bribing the priests; but it was accompanied by a certain other Act, as fatal, perhaps, as either of those—namely, for disfranchisement of all the forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland. Sir Robert was determined at least not to yield this point. It was the forty-shilling freeholders who had humbled the Beresford domination in Waterford, and destroyed the Foster monopoly in Louth; it was the forty-shilling freeholders who had carried O’Connell triumphantly to the head of the poll in Clare; and, by destroying that whole class of voters, Peel hoped very reasonably, not only to render the remaining voters more amenable to corrupt influences, but also to take away the motive, which had heretofore existed, for granting leases to small farmers, and thus, in good time, to turn those independent farmers into tenants at will. He had his own profound reasons for this—which will fully appear hereafter.

The debates on the Relief Bill were, as might have been expected, very violent and bitter. The fanatical section of English and Irish Protestantism was deeply moved. In the mind of those people all was lost; and Sir Robert Peel

\* *Memoirs*: by the Right Honourable Sir Robert Peel, Bart. Published by the trustees of his paper—Lord Mahon, and Right Honourable Ed. Cardwell, M.P. London, 1856.



and the Duke were almost directly charged with being agents of the Pope of Rome. However, the bill passed through its two first readings in the Commons; and the third reading was passed on the 30th of March by a majority of thirty-six. Next day it was carried to the House of Lords; and on the 2d of April its second reading was moved by the Duke of Wellington, who made no scruple to urge its necessity in order "to prevent civil war." Sir Robert Peel, in his argument for the law, had been less explicit and straightforward than the Duke—he had only said the measure was needful to prevent great dangers and "public calamity." \*

After violent debates in the House of Lords, lasting several days, the bill was passed a third time, and passed by a majority of one hundred and four. It then received the royal assent; and what is called Catholic Emancipation was an accomplished fact.

O'Connell, in the meantime, presented himself at the bar of the House of Commons, claiming to take his seat as member for Clare. This was before the passing of the bill into a law. But an election petition was pending, sent forward by certain electors of Clare, against the validity of his return. The investigation of this petition consumed time; but at length the committee reported Mr. O'Connell duly elected. The Emancipation Act was now passed, and was the law of the land. O'Connell, thereupon, held himself entitled to go in and take his seat, subject only to the new oaths. For this purpose he repaired to the House on the 15th of May, was introduced in the usual form by Lords Ebrington and Duncannon, and walked to the table to be sworn by the Clerk. But Sir Robert Peel had prudently provided against this in the new law, which admitted only those who should, "*after the commencement of that Act*, be returned as members of the House of Commons," to take their seats under the new oaths. It was a mean piece of spite; and its special object was to give Sir Robert an opportunity of snubbing O'Connell one last time, before yielding finally to his imperious demand.

Accordingly, the Clerk of the House tendered to the new member the now-abrogated oaths—one being the oath of Supremacy (namely, that the King of

England is head of the Church), and the other, "that the sacrifice of the mass is impious and idolatrous," and so forth. He refused to take these oaths. He was then heard at the bar of the House, where he claimed his right to sit and vote: his claim was disallowed by a vote. The old oaths were once more tendered to him. He read over the stupid trash in an audible voice; then said, raising his head, that he declined to take that oath, because "one part of it he knew to be false, and another he did not believe to be true." A new writ was then issued, to hold an election for the County Clare.

The series of measures called "Emancipation" consisted of three Acts of Parliament. The first, an Act for suppression of the Catholic Association as an illegal and dangerous society; the second, an Act for the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland (not in England, where that qualification was retained); and third, the Relief Act proper, abolishing the old oaths against transubstantiation, &c., and substituting another very long and ingenious oath (for Catholics only) testifying allegiance to the Crown; promising to maintain the Hanoverian settlement and succession; declaring that it is no article of the Catholic faith "that Princes excommunicated by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects; that neither the Pope nor any other foreign prince has any temporal or civil jurisdiction within the realm; promising to defend the settlement of property as established by law; solemnly disclaiming, disavowing, and abjuring 'any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment as settled by law;' and engaging never to exercise any privilege conferred by that Act 'to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or Protestant government.'"

The Act admitted Catholics, on taking this oath, to be members of any lay body corporate, and to do corporate acts, and vote at corporate elections; but not to join in a vote for presentation to a benefice in the gift of any corporation.

The Act further most formally affirmed and preserved the great principle of Protestant Ascendancy, by specially excluding Catholics from the high offices of Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Chancellor; the former being the officer who makes nearly all appointments in Ireland, and exercises the royal power to pardon—or not to pardon; the latter being the person who decides on the guardianship of minors, and orders in what religion they are to be brought up, in the absence of express directions from their parents. The Lord Chancellor also has control over

\* Sir Robert Peel, in his letter to Doctor Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, in February, said:—"It is easy to blame the confessions that were made in 1782 and in 1793; but they were not made without an intimate conviction of their absolute necessity in order to prevent greater dangers." Sir Robert says again:—"I can with truth affirm, that in advising and promoting the measures of 1829, I was swayed by no fear, except the fear of public calamity."—*Memoirs*: by Sir Robert Peel.



commissions of magistrates, and cancels them at his pleasure, thus controlling, in a very great degree, the administration of justice.

Bearing in mind these important provisions and exceptions—and further, that the Anglican Church still continued the established religion of the land, and still devoured the Catholic people by its exactions—it is tolerably clear that by the Relief Bill Catholics were not quite half emancipated.

But the most fatal blow to the liberties of the Irish people was the contemporaneous Act for disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders, and for raising the county qualification to £10 a year—five times the qualification required in England. Only seventeen members of the House of Commons voted against this grievous injustice. It was introduced by Sir Robert Peel, on the ostensible ground that there was too great a disposition on the part of Irish landlords to divide their land into minute portions; that the franchise was a mere instrument with which the landed aristocracy exercised power and control over the elections; and that this control had lately passed into the hands of the priests (which was worse); and he cited as an example what had lately taken place in Louth and Monaghan and Waterford. In other words, he would disfranchise those small farmers *because* they had shown themselves capable of defying landlord control and acting independently. Amongst those who opposed this measure were Lord Duncannon, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Huskisson. Their argument was: “If the forty-shilling freeholders had been corrupt, *like those of Penrhyn*, their disfranchisement might be defended; but the only offence of the persons against whom the bill was directed had been that they exercised their privilege honestly and independently, according to their conscience.”\*

It is singular that O’Connell said not a word at any meeting, nor wrote any letter, protesting against this wholesale abolition of the civil and political rights of those to whom he owed his election for Clare. He thus consented by his silence to see cut away from under his own feet the very groundwork and material of all effective political action in Ireland; and often afterwards had occasion, as Ireland also had to lament the impotence and futility of all patriotic effort for the real advancement of their country, in consequence of the destruction of the forty-shilling freeholders. Many thousands of these freeholders, and of their children, are now working on canals and railroads in Ame-

rica. The new and cheap ejectment laws were in full force; and were soon to act with fatal effect.

We can now appreciate in some measure the true *spirit* in which “Catholic Emancipation” was effected. It was “to avert civil war,” said the Duke of Wellington; it was “to avoid greater dangers,” said Sir Robert Peel. It was emphatically *not* to do justice, nor to repair a wrong. In the words of an eminent French writer on Irish affairs,\* nothing is more certain than that neither the King nor his Ministers intended to do an act of justice and reparation towards the Catholics. The bill of 1829 was nothing else than a concession wrested from them by *circumstances*; which the King would never have consented to, if he had found Ministers decided, even at the cost of a civil war, to perpetuate an iniquity of three centuries; and which his Ministers would never have proposed if they had not apprehended that civil war, in the interest of the Protestant establishment itself. Now, when a concession has been extorted by force, and is not a spontaneous homage to truth and justice, those who grant it may, perhaps, respect it as to its mere letter; but certainly they will not loyally comply with its spirit. When we see their practical application of it, it is evident that they desire to hold back with one hand what they have been obliged to bestow with the other; and that, deeply regretting the necessity they have had to obey, when that necessity becomes less urgent, they observe only so much of their engagement as is needful to save them from the charge of perjury. Hence comes it also that there is so little gratitude manifested for this concession—and in truth, those may dispense with gratitude who owe only to fear “*a little justice and a little freedom.*”

## CHAPTER XX.

1829—1840.

Results of the Relief Act—O’Connell re-elected for Clare—Drain of Agricultural Produce—Educated Class of Catholics Bought—The Tithe War—Lord Anglesea’s Victory—O’Connell’s Associations—Anglesea’s Proclamations—Prosecution of O’Connell—National Education—Tithe Tragedies—Newtownbarry—Carrickshock—Change of Dynasty in France—Reform Agitation in England—What Reform meant in Ireland—Cholera—Resistance to Tithe—Lord Grey’s Coercion Act—Abolition of Negro Slavery—Church Temporalities Act—Repeal Debate—Surplus Population—Surplus Produce—Tithe Carnage at Rathcormack—Queen Victoria’s Accession—Three Measures against Ireland—Poor Law—Tithe Law—Municipal Reform—Castle Sheriffs.

\* Le Père Perraud. *Etudes sur l’Irlande contemporaine.*

\* Account of Debate in *Annual Register* for 1829.



IMPERFECT and stinted and guarded as the Catholic Emancipation Act was, it was nevertheless felt in Ireland to be a great triumph and noble achievement of O'Connell, who at once rose to the highest pinnacle of popular favour. The Catholics almost worshipped him as their Heaven-sent deliverer; and the partizans of the good old traditionary Protestant Ascendancy thought the end of the world was at hand. The sword brandished in the hand of Walker's statue, standing upon a lofty column on a bastion of Derry walls, fell down with a crash, and was shivered to pieces, upon the very day when His Majesty, George IV., placed his signature on the Emancipation Act; which he did not do, however, without having first broken and trampled upon a pen which was handed to him for that purpose, in a highly dramatic manner, and with the most perfect mimicry of deep feeling. Sir Harcourt Lees, for his part, thought the time was now at last surely come to "put down Popery" by Act of Parliament, and to send the "Arch-agitator" to the Tower.

As for O'Connell himself, and the more thoughtful amongst his friends and supporters of the Catholic Association, they saw too well that little or nothing was gained. Not only was their civil and political inferiority maintained and formally re-asserted; but the great body of brave farmers, who had frightened the "empire" by their independence, was swept out of civil existence at a blow. It at once became evident to O'Connell that there was no salvation for Ireland but in a repeal of the odious and fraudulent Union. On his return to Ireland, as if sensible that what had been already effected for his country was rather apparent than real, he declared openly that the next victory to be achieved must be the repeal of the Union. Both at Ennis and at Youghal he made speeches enforcing the necessity of this great measure, and promising never to rest until it should be accomplished—a pledge which, indeed, he laboured all his life to redeem.

On the passage of the law disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders, orders had been at once sent to Ireland to commence a "registration" of those who still retained the franchise, possessing a freehold of £10 yearly value. This haste was for the purpose of acting as soon as practicable upon Irish elections, and, if possible, defeating O'Connell when he should again present himself in Clare under the new writ. He was not opposed, however, on his second election at Clare, and was again sent back to Parliament, with all the

qualifications required even by the new law. He did not at once take his seat, as Parliament was prorogued on the 24th of June.

This year, Ireland was said to be in an "alarming" state—there was "crime and outrage" in several counties, and especially in Tipperary. In fact, the old exaction of tithes not only continued to be enforced, but was pressed with even increased rigour, seeing that Papists had become so insolent. The consequence was the most natural in the world—some tithe-proctors were forced to eat their processes, and also had their ears cut off. The Tipperary magistrates assembled in great alarm, and demanded the immediate application of the "Insurrection Act," for they could not understand how people should thus resist payment of their lawful tithes, unless there were a conspiracy to subvert the Protestant government and bring in the Pope.

In truth, there was throughout the island a very unsettled and uneasy condition of the popular mind. Men were told that they were "relieved" and "emancipated," but they felt no advantage from it whatsoever. They tried to feel pride in the victory which they were assured they had won over a British Ministry; but in the meantime they found themselves very generally disfranchised; and what was worse—landlords were refusing to make new leases of farms, and were breaking the existing leases where they could, having no longer the motive to rear up a small freehold population for the hustings. The chairmen of quarter-sessions, and the sheriffs and bailiffs, were busy with their ejectments; and pauperism began extensively to prevail. The seasons, indeed, had been for some time rather favourable, and grain and cattle were abundant; but the British system had now been so well established in our island, that all this wealth of bounteous nature flowed off instantly to England, and the price of it also. All went the same way. The export of agricultural produce to England out of Ireland had grown so enormous within the past few years, that it had been judged expedient in 1826 to place that trade "on the footing of a *coasting trade*." In other words, no custom-house accounts were to be kept of it; and the amount of it was thus concealed for many years. In that year, 1826, however, the exports to England had been to the value of almost eight millions in corn and cattle. It was but small benefit to the Irish people to have favourable seasons and plenteous harvests. Their wealth not only made



itself wings and flew to England; but as tenancy at will now became *the fashion*, landlords increased rents in proportion to increased produce, and then went to England—the centre of political action and fashionable life—to spend those improved rents. For all this there was no remedy in Emancipation.

It soon became evident, also, that the effects of the Relief Act would be disastrous in another respect. Parliament and the Judicial Bench being now opened (always with the exception of the place of Lord-Chancellor) to aspiring Catholics of the educated class, *their* interests and sympathies became separated from those of their countrymen. Undoubtedly, this result had been calculated by the prudent statesman who accomplished the Relief measure; and his plan succeeded but too well. That plan may be described, in general terms, as a plan for corrupting the higher classes and extirpating the lower; and Emancipation, disfranchising the latter and offering bribes to the former, was admirably calculated to buy over to the British interests such as aspired to the offices and emoluments dispensed by England, and to make them forget the duty they owed to their own countrymen, and the honour and welfare of their native land. Since that day, therefore, we have seen constantly more and more of the higher class of Catholics, in various positions, *helping* England to govern—that is, to pillage and depopulate—this ill-fated island. Since that day have been many Catholic members of Parliament—they have solicited places for useful constituents. Catholic attorney-generals—they have packed juries to “do the King’s business.” Catholic judges—they have sat complacently on the bench, and permitted those juries to be packed, and pretended to try their fellow-countrymen before those packed juries, to glut the vengeance of a Government which cannot bear to be disquieted while clearing off its “surplus population.” In other words, those members of Parliament, attorney-generals, and judges, have sold themselves for money and station, to a Government which they know to be the mortal enemy of their countrymen and kinsmen, and have abandoned those countrymen and kinsmen to certain slaughter and extermination.

Such have been the substantial results of the “Relief Measures” of 1829; and O’Connell had good reason for his conclusion,—that no effectual service could be rendered to the country, short of annulling the Union with England.

The discontent and disappointment of

the people (who found that Emancipation did not save them from starvation) found vent in occasional deeds of violence; and always for the old reasons—ruthless seizures for tithe, and wholesale ejection of tenants. Many thousands of farmers now found themselves emancipated, but disfranchised, and in imminent danger of being ejected and thrown out on the highways. They were capable by law of holding high office; but exposed, in fact, to see their children perishing by hunger and hardship. The crimes committed in Ireland have nearly always one specific character, and one obvious motive and provocation. Their victims have been almost uniformly tithe-proctors, who seized upon the small store of the poor—or landlords or agents, who cleared estates—or incoming tenants, who rented farms from which others had been ejected. Murders for money, from jealousy, or in personal quarrel, have been at all times much more rare in Ireland than in England; and, indeed, the lamentable acts of violence which did occur were generally perpetrated by men who had not previously known the doomed victim, and in obedience to the decree of a secret society. The hapless people of the country had long felt and experienced that the laws were made not for them but against them; they had long been accustomed to see law at one side, and justice at the other; they could not perceive why there should be any law compelling them to pay clergymen whom they never saw, and at whose services they would shudder to assist; nor why there should be a law to fling them out from the little farm which they had improved and rendered fertile by the sweat of their brows. Hence the series of secret combinations, with their own judicial sentences and desperate executions. These proceedings, however, always drew down upon the peasantry of the neighbourhood a most ferocious and disproportionate vengeance, and formed the excuse for keeping Arms Acts and Insurrection Acts almost in permanence.

The grievance of tithes, and the whole of that monstrous iniquity called the Established Church, seemed to be felt by the people with even more intensity of irritation, since they were told that they were now “Emancipated,” and that there was an end of Protestant Ascendancy. What this Emancipation might be, they did not well understand; they knew no other result from it than that they were deprived of their franchise, and could therefore get no more leases. And they thought that they saw Protestant Ascendancy all around them as rampant as



ever. Protestant Ascendancy was always at their doors. It entered their cabins, and carried off their pans and pots, their calves and pigs, to satisfy a Protestant rector. Protestant magistrates (who were in the great majority) were always ready to browbeat them from the bench, and to send policemen to search their beds for concealed arms. Protestant jurors always met them in the courts of justice, and proved to them that the laws of the land were not for them. If sometimes, therefore, these people desperately took the law into their own hands, or even associated together to be a kind of law unto themselves, and executive also—dismal as such a state of society certainly is—the whole blame of it rests upon that unjust and savage system of dealing with Ireland which was called “Government,” and of which a faint outline only has been traced in these pages.

King George IV. died in 1830; and was succeeded by his brother King William IV.; an event of little or no interest to Ireland.

The next year was occupied in England by a most energetic agitation for a Reform in Parliament,—an affair which also concerned Ireland extremely little. The Reform was to consist chiefly in disfranchising old boroughs which had become ruinous and almost uninhabited, and giving the franchise to large centres of population which had never returned members of Parliament before. Excitement on this question ran very high throughout the other island, but did not extend in any great measure to Ireland, whose proportions of representation had been fixed by the Act of Union. O’Connell, and the other Catholic and Liberal Irish members, all supported the “Reform” Ministry, and helped to carry the measure in 1832, imagining, probably, that Ireland would thereby establish a claim upon the popular party in England for support and friendly sympathy in asserting her own rights—an expectation which was signally disappointed.

On the 4th of February, 1830, Parliament opened, but was soon dissolved, and a new election took place. This time O’Connell abandoned Clare, and achieved another brilliant victory over the Beresford interest at Waterford. A considerable number of Catholics now entered Parliament for the first time; O’Gorman Mahon for Clare, Richard More O’Ferrall for Kildare, Lord Killeen for Meath, &c. Mr. Smith O’Brien continued to represent Ennis, and was a most attentive and industrious member of Parliament, acting on most questions

with the Whig party, and sincerely cherishing the delusion (which he afterwards had to give up) that Whigs were more friendly to right and justice in Ireland than Tories.

In the beginning of 1830 the Duke of Northumberland was Lord-Lieutenant. On the change of Ministry the Marquis of Anglesea was again sent over as Viceroy, and Lord Plunket was made Lord-Chancellor—an office which he discharged with great ability for many years. He had by this time forgotten that the Union was a nullity and a fraud, which his sons were to be sworn to resist and annul. One of his sons became a bishop, by the gracious appointment of the King. Yet Mr. Plunket was right in denouncing the Union as a nullity and a fraud; and if he had been thoroughly honest, he would now have been found by O’Connell’s side, demanding the restoration of an independent Irish Legislature.

During the course of this year there was established a “Society of the Friends of Ireland.” It was nothing but the Catholic Association under another name; and its object was to agitate the repeal of the Union. But the course pursued by Mr. O’Connell, since the Relief Act, had occasioned violent irritation in England amongst both Whigs and Tories. That after so generous and noble a concession as Emancipation was represented to be—which was to have fully satisfied the Irish people, and filled them with rejoicing “loyalty”—that, instead of gratitude and loyal contentment, there should immediately spring up a new and acrimonious agitation, openly aiming at the “dismemberment of the empire,” seemed to those Whigs and Tories an example of the basest ingratitude. O’Connell, too, whose deportment in Parliament was perfectly dignified and business-like, when he came to Ireland, and found himself the centre of a great meeting of his countrymen, often used violent and denunciatory language concerning political opponents, and even sometimes turned into ridicule some grave and reverend Tory, or some sneaking and intriguing Whig.

In short, it was decided by the administration, all Liberal as it was, to put a stop to the “Arch-agitator’s” exciting proceedings; and as the “Friends of Ireland” fell undoubtedly under the former Act for suppressing illegal associations, the Viceroy was instructed to “proclaim it under that Act, and threaten prosecution.” The society was, as usual, at once dissolved, and was at once succeeded by the “Anti-Union Association.” O’Connell omitted no opportunity of insisting upon



a restoration of the Irish Parliament, and demonstrating the necessity of that measure, which made him more popular and powerful in Dublin than he had ever been before; for it was in Dublin chiefly that the repeal spirit then existed. The country people and the provincial towns were not yet aroused on that question; but the metropolis appreciated it at once. There was to be held on the 27th of December a great assembly and procession of the trades of Dublin, with the express object of complimenting Mr. O'Connell for his advocacy of an Irish Parliament. The bands were to form at Phibsborough, in the suburbs of Dublin, and march with their banners and *insignia* into the city, to O'Connell's house, where they were to present him with an address. This procession of peaceful and unarmed men appeared to Lord Anglesea too perilous a thing to be permitted, with due regard to the peace of the city; and he issued a proclamation absolutely forbidding the assembly. This of course implied an intention of dispersing it by force. By O'Connell's advice, therefore, the meeting was not held.

This was but the beginning of a long contest between the Arch-agitator and the Marquis of Anglesea, the former using every legal device and contrivance to make for the people some occasion of meeting and expressing their sentiments, and the Marquis regularly laying on the heavy hand of power, and menacing unarmed citizens with military violence. Mr. O'Connell was unmeasured enough in the terms of very natural resentment, which he applied to Lord Anglesea, and the whole Whig Government, whom he characterized as "base, brutal, and bloody Whigs." But while he could use indignant language, the Lord-Lieutenant had all the practical advantages in such a contest. He had his sheriffs and juries at hand, and the Court of King's Bench always open; so that anything was an "illegal and dangerous association" which he might choose to prosecute. He had the garrison of Dublin constantly ready for action. And besides these things, the noble Marquis opened O'Connell's letters in the post-office, as well as letters addressed to him, in order that he might know who were his correspondents, what were his designs, and what were his resources. The Marquis had the letters always resealed with the utmost care with counterfeited seals, so that the persons receiving the letters should not suspect they had been opened, and so be put on their guard.\*

The next name under which Mr. O'Connell made his Association appear was the Irish Volunteers for Repeal of the Union; but this had no better fate than the rest. When it was "proclaimed," however, and commanded not to meet, Mr. O'Connell for once did not submit. He said, and this was true, that a proclamation could not make law; and pledged himself as a lawyer that his organization was perfectly legal as it was. He, therefore, and many of his usual attendants, went and held the meeting. Thereupon O'Connell, together with Mr. Lawless, Mr. Steele, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Clooney, and two or three others, were forthwith arrested, and brought before magistrates, where they were required to give bail. On issuing from the magistrates' office the Arch-agitator found a great crowd in the streets, and made them a great speech, of course:—"Yesterday," he exclaimed, "I was only half an agitator, to-day I am a whole one! Day and night will I now strive to fling off despotism, to redeem my country, to repeal the Union."

The prosecution proceeded; and as Mr. O'Connell knew perfectly well that he could have no chance before a Castle jury properly arranged, which would be sure to find him at once guilty of whatever he should be charged withal, he dexterously delayed the striking of the jury, and gained time. The Orange party was in vehement excitement; and it need scarcely be added that in England all parties were charmed with the idea of having the loud-tongued agitator locked up in a jail for a misdemeanour. After some ingenuity in pleading, O'Connell allowed judgment to go by default upon several of the counts; that is, substantially pleaded guilty on those counts. He knew he might as well do so, as he would be arraigned before a sure jury; and all the world waited till he should be called up for sentence. But he was never called up for sentence. It happened just then that the Whig Ministers. But that list extends over a period of only eleven years. It was avowed by ministers that the post-office *espionage* had existed long before Lord Anglesea's time, as it certainly existed long after that of Earl de Grey, in 1843. Earl de Grey is the last of the letter-spies mentioned in the return. That return, however, has taken care not to inform us *whose* letters were thus opened and copied. It only gives a list of the Viceroys, Chancellors, Archbishops, and Lord-Justices who did order such manipulations of letters, and the years in which they so ordered it. It appears that such warrants were constantly in existence for ten years out of the eleven; but we are not informed as to the numbers of the persons whose correspondence was thus investigated, nor any of their names. O'Connell was, of course, one; and it was in the very height of the contest waged with O'Connell, to put down his several associations, that the Marquis of Anglesea is first returned as a letter-spy.

\* The Marquis of Anglesea is first on the list of letter-spies which was laid before Parliament in



try was straining every nerve to secure a good majority for their Reform; and O'Connell and those others whom he could influence, or who would be revolted by any severity exercised towards him, were not allies to be thrown away for the sake of gratifying the Orangemen. For that time, therefore, legal proceedings against the agitator went no further.

The year 1831 was marked by the establishment of the national system of education in Ireland, in pursuance of a bill introduced by Lord Stanley. Two years after (1833) the grants of public money for the education of the poor, which had previously been enjoyed by the Kildare Place School Society and other proselytizing institutions, were intrusted to the Lord-Lieutenant, to be expended on the instruction of children of all sects, under the superintendence of commissioners appointed by the Crown, and called "Commissioners of National Education." Two years afterwards (1835), these commissioners were incorporated with power to hold lands. The ostensible principles of this new establishment were "Liberal;" there was to be no interference with the religious creed of any pupil; and clergymen of each denomination were to be allowed the opportunity of giving religious instructions to the children of their respective faiths.

But practically the Government took good care that, both on the first establishment of the board and ever since, the great majority of the commissioners should be Protestants. The scheme was intended to take into the hands of the British Government the formation of the minds of young Irishmen, and the moulding of their first impressions in such a way that they might forget they were Irish, and feel and think as like English children as possible. Their reading lessons have been carefully edited to this end; most of them by Dr. Wheatley, an Englishman, and others by Mr. Carlisle, a Scotchman. The intention was not so much to convert Catholic children as to denationalize them.

It had been for long ages prohibited to the Irish Catholics to be educated at all, under heavy penalties. When these penal laws had disappeared, and the British Government found that the Irish were very desirous to educate their children, that Government resolved, if they must be taught, to teach them itself, and especially to keep them as much as possible ignorant of the history of their own country—a very prudent and politic design, if it could only have been accomplished.

For the rest, these national schools have

been tolerably well conducted; but in districts where the population is of mixed religions, Catholic children, for the most part, have received no benefit from them, on account of the objections of the Catholic clergy against mixed education. In other districts, where Catholics form the whole population, these objections did not practically apply.

In 1850 there were nearly five thousand schools under this board, and five hundred and eleven thousand two hundred and thirty-nine scholars.

The tithe war raged violently this year. The people were becoming more and more indisposed to pay Protestant rectors, especially in the South of Ireland, where those rectors often have no flocks. On the banks of the Slaney, on the very border between Wexford and Carlow County, and at the foot of the stately Mount Leinster, stands the little town of Newtownbarry. On the 18th of June, 1831, this usually quiet village was the scene of a bloody tithe tragedy. The Rev. Mr. M'Clintock would have his tithe; and by aid of the police and yeomanry, he had seized the crops and goods of several persons in the neighbourhood. These things were to be auctioned in Newtownbarry market place on the market day. Before that day anonymous written notices were sent to many persons in the country, requesting them to come in and *attend* the sale of their neighbours' pigs, beds, and kettles. Considerable numbers of people attended in consequence, but not armed—their object being only to keep all persons back from bidding at this auction. It was known that large crowds had come in, and that the forced sale must almost certainly produce a collision. But the Rev. Mr. M'Clintock would have his rights. The property seized was brought into town, guarded by a large force of constabulary, who were to be supported, if needful, by another large force of yeomanry. The sale opened. The people pressed forward, and kept away, by a show of intimidation, the few who might have been disposed to purchase. At last, the police attacked the unarmed multitudes; were seconded with great alacrity by the yeomanry; and very soon thirteen slain men and twenty wounded were lying in their blood on the street of Newtownbarry. No person was ever brought to punishment for this slaughter. Indeed, it was felt by the Orange party that the Rev. Mr. M'Clintock had only shown proper spirit in vindicating his right; that this course of intimidation had gone too far; and that it was time an example should be made. More moderate persons,



however, even of the Established Church, could not but think it unfortunate that ministers of religion should so often have to wring their blood-stained dues out of the very vitals of parishioners who hate them and all their works.

Six months after the affair of Newtownbarry, befell the other tithe slaughter of Carrickshock. Certain moneys were due for tithe to the Rev. Hans Hamilton, rector of Knocktopher, in the County Kilkenny. A process-server was sent out to serve the needful documents, and this functionary was protected by a large force of armed police. The people assembled in considerable and still-increasing numbers, their object being to get hold of the bailiff and force him to "eat the latitats"—papers of that nature being supposed in those parts to be the natural food of process-servers. Menacing crowds of country people gathered around the line of march of the officer and his escort; and when they arrived at a bare and desolate tract called the Common of Carrickshock, traversed by a lane which is bordered by a low wall, in most places broken down, the demands of the people to have the process-server delivered up to them became pressing and loud. At length a young man sprang into the lane, seized the process-server, and endeavoured to carry him off, out of the hands of his protectors. He was instantly shot dead. Then there was a general onslaught. The people had armed themselves with a species of short pikes, and they fell upon the police with fury. Eleven of the constables were killed, and a good many of the people also; but the legal documents were not served that day. It was fast becoming evident that some measures must be adopted to prevent these sanguinary collisions.

In England the resistance of the Irish to levies for tithes was, as usual, represented as the evidence of a deep Popish conspiracy to overturn the Protestant Church; and the Whigs were almost as much excited by this idea as the Tories. The voluminous Tory historian, Alison, discovered indeed, for once, that "the Pope's influence in Ireland" was on the present occasion beneficial: inasmuch as "the Vatican threw off the mask, and measures were commenced evidently intended to destroy the Protestant Establishment in Ireland, and open the door to the replacing of the Catholic faith in these realms." Thus, English Whigs drew off in some measure from their association with the Irish Catholics; and this weakened the party of Reform. The cholera also raged all through the summer of 1832; and this, according to the same

historian, was another beneficial event, as it sensibly abated the Reform mania.

The King, however, in a speech from the Throne, recommended attention to the question of tithes; and a committee of the Lords was appointed to investigate and report upon it. They reported in favour of commuting the tithe to a charge upon land. In the debate on reception of this report, it was stated that the arrears of tithes due but not recoverable in the four dioceses of Ossory, Leighlin, Cashel, and Ferns, was computed at £84,954. A law was in the meantime proposed and carried by Government, authorizing an issue from the consolidated fund of a large sum of money for relief of those clergymen who could not collect their tithes. A part of the County Tipperary was also proclaimed under the Coercion Act then pending; and Lord Grey was preparing a still more stringent Coercion Act for the next year.

Mr. O'Connell vehemently opposed the grant from the consolidated fund, which was accompanied by an authority to *levy* the amount due, in order to repay the advance. This was in fact the Government assuming upon itself the function of the tithe-rector and the bailiff, with the aid of all the troops and police; and it was plainly intended to make a few salutary examples of slaughter. Throughout the Parliamentary discussions on these questions there does not appear to have been the slightest intention on the part of either party to relieve Ireland from the burden of the Established Church; all their anxiety was how to insure to the clergy their income out of the pockets of the people in some way which it would be impossible to resist or evade. On the other hand, O'Connell declared in Parliament—"The Irish people are determined to get rid of tithes, and get rid of them they will."

But the resistance of the farmers was carried on peacefully; and generally consisted in deterring purchasers at tithe-sales by the demonstration of a resolute public opinion. The same force operated to prevent neighbours from aiding to remove crops or other things, even in case they should have been nominally sold. It cannot be denied that this was nothing but a very manifest intimidation, and would have been quite unjustifiable if the claim for tithe had been just.

The next year Lord Grey brought forward his Coercion Bill, and the Tories not only supported it with alacrity, but hailed it with joy, as a proof that the most "Liberal" of English reformers had come round to *their* policy for the government



of Ireland; and, in fact, since that day English Tories and English Whigs have generally been in the most gratifying accord upon Coercion Bills for Ireland. However they may differ upon other matters, they are an unit whenever it is a question of dragooning the Irish.

The Coercion Acts are all very like one another; but this one contained the new provision that the Viceroy might suppress and disperse *any meeting* which he should deem dangerous to the public peace. The bill contained the usual powers and penalties. The Lord-Lieutenant might "proclaim" any district: all persons in proclaimed districts to remain within doors from one hour after sunset until sunrise, and also to abstain from attending any meeting whatsoever. No meeting was to be held, even to petition Parliament, without ten days' previous notice to the Lord-Lieutenant, and his sanction to hold such meeting. The proclaimed districts were to be subject to martial law; every offender was to be tried before a court-martial; and all officers of justice and military on duty were (in such proclaimed district) to have authority to enter houses at any hour, and search for arms. The writ of *Habeas Corpus* was to be suspended for three months after the arrest of any person, as respected that person.

These atrocious provisions for torturing the people, and for repressing even all open and peaceful expressions of opinion, continued to be the law of the land for five years. This law was then succeeded by another law of the same kind; and that by another and another. It might be supposed that the British Parliament might as well pass a perpetual Coercion Act for Ireland at once, and take away altogether the writ of *Habeas Corpus*; but such a measure as this would be supposed to be too abhorrent to the spirit of the British Constitution. The Coercion Acts, therefore, are all proposed for a limited time, and a hope is regularly expressed by the member of the Government who introduces one of them, that the time is approaching when these "exceptional" measures will be no longer needful to the good government and well-being of Ireland.

In the same session, Parliament passed the Act for abolishing negro slavery in the British West Indies, and appropriated twenty millions sterling to compensate the planters. Of course, the money was borrowed, and added to the national debt; and England and Ireland have been paying the interest on it ever since.

"The Church Temporalities Act" for Ireland was passed in the year 1833. It

was introduced by Lord Althorpe, and became law on the 30th of July. His lordship stated the entire revenue of the Irish Church at £732,000 sterling. The new Act abolished ten bishoprics, by consolidating their sees with sees adjoining. The consolidation was to take place gradually, on the death of bishops. "Church rates" were abolished. The revenues of the sees which were to remain in existence were diminished; and the Church property of the suppressed sees, together with the saving by diminished revenues, were estimated as creating a fund of £3,000,000, to be vested in a board of "Ecclesiastical Commissioners," to be expended for strictly ecclesiastical purposes; the principle being that no Church property could be alienated from its legal owners, and that the country was not to be relieved of any part of the burden of this enormous Establishment. Accordingly, the people were not at all benefited by this Act. Even the abolition of "Church rates" was only a boon to the landlords, who immediately raised the rents of their tenants at will.

Next was introduced and passed another bill, appropriating one million sterling to the parsons, in compensation for the tithes due and unpaid for three years.

In 1834 O'Connell commenced seriously the work of repeal of the Union in Parliament. His first move was a proposal to appoint a committee to inquire into the conduct of Baron Smith, one of the Irish judges, whom he accused of introducing politics into his charges from the bench. The committee was refused, because it was held that an Irish judge could not avoid the subject of politics in his judicial addresses, seeing that Irish "crimes" were almost wholly of a political character. On the 23d of April, O'Connell formally brought forward in Parliament the question of repealing the Union. There followed a debate of four days. His chief opponent was Mr. Spring Rice (afterwards Lord Monteagle), who laboured to prove that Ireland had largely profited by the Union, and was at that moment enjoying exemption from several specific taxes which pressed upon Great Britain. In truth, according to his statistics, Ireland was growing rich, or at least ought to be, in consequence of the generous forbearance of the English people and Government, in burdening the other parts of the empire with imposts which she had not to pay.

But, notwithstanding statistics, the notorious truth was, that England was becoming alway richer, and her people more luxurious in their style of living,



while Ireland was fast sinking into destitution. The Irish rents spent by absentee proprietors now amounted to more than four millions. Manufacturers in Ireland (with the single exception of linen) no longer existed. Extermination of tenantry (or, as the people were now always termed, "surplus population") had increased to a dreadful extent; and those who had means to emigrate were flying from the country in wild terror. A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* for January, 1833—the writer being no other than Sir Archibald Alison—states that the emigration in 1831 from Ireland amounted to eighteen thousand. The writer adds: "No reason can be assigned why it should not be one hundred and eighty thousand." From this time the leading idea of English statesmen and economists was, to devise some way of getting rid of the "surplus" people.

Yet while the people were said to be surplus, the island in which they lived was steadily and rapidly increasing her export of provisions. The export of grain and cattle into England, which had amounted in 1826 to nearly eight millions sterling, had now been augmented by about one-half; and this wasting process—shipping off men in one direction, and the food they had raised in another—went on developing itself, as we shall see, until the export of the surplus people reached three hundred thousand a year, and the export of the surplus food amounted to at least twenty millions sterling; Ireland being the only country known in ancient or in modern times, which had these two kinds of "surplus" for export at one time. It was so plainly demonstrated, however, in Parliament, by Mr. Spring Rice and other speakers, that the country was prospering under the Union, that O'Connell's motion was at once voted down. On the same occasion, the House of Peers not only rejected the proposition unanimously, but addressed the King, declaring their firm resolution to maintain the "integrity of the empire."

Various efforts were made in this and the following year to force upon Parliament some just measure for the reduction of the Irish Church Establishment. Mr. Ward, an English member, was especially zealous in this cause; but as these proposals were steadily resisted, and came to nothing whatever for several years, we need not occupy ourselves with them here. The Church bill of Mr. Ward contained what was called the "Appropriation Clause," for devoting to State purposes, and the general improvement of the country, the funds to be curtailed

from the wealth of the Church. This was the great stumbling-block to the Tories, and to the House of Lords; and the measure was abandoned.

The last scene of tithe carnage was enacted at Rathcormack, a village in Waterford County. It was on the 18th of December, 1834. Seizure had been made upon the stackyard of a poor widow, to pay the Protestant rector. Her neighbours became strongly excited, and assembled in crowds, with the apparent purpose of resisting the abstraction of the property. A narrow lane, or *boreen*, led up from the highroad to the widow's place. In this lane, the people had overturned a waggon to block up the way, and seemed resolved to defend their barricade. The officers of the law approached, well supported by armed men, both police and military. There was some parley; stones were thrown; the Riot Act was read; and then orders were given to fire. A destructive volley was poured in upon the unarmed crowd; many of them fell, killed and wounded; and his reverence carried off, over the bleeding corpses, his tithe of the widow's sheaves. The excitement and indignation aroused by this "Rathcormack massacre" were profound and wide-spread. The combinations amongst the peasantry to resist tithe sales, and to prevent all persons from purchasing, at their own proper peril, became more organized and formidable. Doctor MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, writing a public letter at this date to the Duke of Wellington, thus expresses himself: "All the united authorities, and the Senate, can never annex the conscientious obligations of law to enactments that are contrary to right, reason, and justice. And hence the stubborn and unconquerable resistance of the people of Ireland to those odious Acts—I will not call them *laws*—which have forced them to pay tribute to the teachers of an adverse creed. I shall freely declare my own resolve. I have leased a small farm, just sufficient to qualify me for the exercise of the franchise. After paying the landlord his rent, neither to parson, proctor, nor agent shall I consent to pay, in the shape of tithe or any other tax, a penny which shall go to the support of the greatest nuisance in this or any other country." It may be well supposed that such a declaration as this coming from a reverend dignitary of the Catholic Church—affirming that the Church laws were no laws, and that he himself would deny and defy them—greatly aggravated and encouraged the organized resistance of the people. If an attempt had been made to levy tithe from the arch-



bishop's farm, no man in the diocese would have dared to bid for his corn-sheaves.

King William IV. died in June, 1837, and Queen Victoria reigned in his stead; a disastrous reign to Ireland.

Within the first three years of this Queen's reign, three measures of great importance were passed for Ireland; all brought forward under pretext of Concession and Liberalism; but all marked in reality with the invariable, inevitable stamp of mortal enmity towards the people of our country. These were, the *Poor Law*, the *Tithe Law*, and the *Law for Municipal Reform*.

Poor laws had become at once necessary in England, on the suppression of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. In Catholic times, and according to Catholic ideas, alms-giving was a Christian duty; from that moment it had to become a tax. Those monasteries had been endowed by charitable and religious people mainly for the relief of the poor; but when their lands came into possession of King Henry's courtiers, the poor immediately began to be regarded as public enemies to be suppressed. The poor man had been a brother, whom it was a privilege and duty to console; he became one of the "dangerous classes," to be well watched, to be often punished, and to be for ever degraded and disgraced. The first English Poor law (27 Henry VIII.) prohibited alms-giving under heavy penalties; and as for "sturdy beggars"—"a sturdy beggar is to be whipped the first time, and if he again offend, he shall suffer death as a felon and an enemy of the commonwealth." The fourteenth of Elizabeth provided that these terrible sturdy beggars "should, for the first offence, be grievously whipped, and burned through the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron of the compass of an inch about; for the second, be deemed as felons; and for the third, suffer death as felons, without the benefit of clergy." Innumerable amendments and alterations have been made since those days in the English system of Poor laws, by which, although these ferocious punishments were mitigated, the principle was maintained, of treating the poor as enemies, and making charity a compulsory tax.

All this system had been hitherto unknown in Ireland, as it is still unknown in France and Spain. Poor men had been always with us, and that in plenty; but no "able-bodied paupers" by profession. If a third of the population was sometimes in a half-starving condition for half the year, the others, who had more comforts around them, shared generously with their suffering neighbours, and thought

they were doing God service. Christian charity was not yet worked by machinery, nor exacted by sheriffs' officers. In short, poor as the Irish were—and they were only poor because the English ate them out of house and home—their whole nature and habits were totally abhorrent to the idea of Poor laws. But it was now the settled design of the British Government to fasten upon them this plague; and for two principal reasons—first, to obtain absolute control, through their own officials, of the great mass of the poor, who might otherwise be turned into elements of revolutionary disturbance; second, to aid and encourage the extermination of the "surplus population;" thus coming in aid of the new code of cheap and easy ejectment; for when there should be great poor houses in every district to receive the homeless people, landlords would have the less hesitation in turning out upon the highways the population of whole townlands at once. Besides, the immense patronage which the new system would place in the hands of the Government—a patronage to be chiefly exercised amongst the class a stage or two removed above the very poor themselves, would give to that Government, in every "Poor Law Union," a very extensive control over the interests and whole way of life of the farming class.

A person named Nicholl, a Scotchman, was sent to make a tour in Ireland, and to report on the distresses of the poor. After a journey of a few weeks, in a country quite unknown to him, this man made a report. He saw much suffering and privation; and reported that during half the year there were five hundred and eighty-five thousand persons, with two millions three hundred thousand *more* depending on them, in a state of utter destitution. He took care to report nothing of the reason of this destitution—namely, the drain of Irish produce to England. Upon the report of this Scotchman, a measure was prepared and introduced by Lord John Russell to establish a universal system of Poor laws, a board of commissioners, and distribution of the island into "Unions." It was in vain that O'Connell, many Catholic bishops, many Protestant Irishmen even, opposed this dreadful law.

It was carried by large majorities, and became law in July, 1838. Two years later there were one hundred and twenty-seven Unions marked out and constituted; fourteen immense Poor Houses, built like prisons, had been built, and the others were in rapid progress. Ireland has been blistering and festering under this British pestilence ever since that day. One of the first consequences of it was a large increase



in the number of ejections. The ejected people, when they had no money to emigrate, could only take refuge in these Poor law jails, bid adieu to all decency and independence, and become paupers for ever, cursing the cruel "charity" that prolonged their miserable existence.

The second of these measures was the Tithe Bill, passed in May, 1838. It *abolished* Church tithes in Ireland; that is to say, it converted them into a charge upon the land; called tithe rent-charge, payable in the first place to the parsons by the landlords, and then leviable on the tenants by distress, along with the rent. Thus, the parsons were relieved from the necessity of coming into immediate collision with the farmers, and raising bloody riots to come at their tenth sheaf and tenth potato. The tithe, was, in fact, confounded with the rent, and put into a form impossible to be resisted or evaded. In return for the additional security and tranquillity thus assured to the clergymen, and for the saving of their heavy expenses to proctors and tithe-farmers, they were made to submit to a deduction of twenty-five per cent. upon the amount claimed by them. On the whole it was a profitable change for the parsons, who have been better paid since that time than they had been for many years before. The people were assured that they were relieved from the "tithe;" and the Church was supposed to have escaped the *odium* of this shocking imposition; but, at the same time, many a poor family saw its last bed carried off by the landlord's bailiffs to pay "tithe rent-charge." Nothing can demonstrate in a more offensive manner the savage resolution of the British Government and people to make us pay for support of that alien Church, or die.

The third great measure which signalized the first years of Queen Victoria was the Municipal Reform Act. The Emancipation Act had been quite inoperative in giving to Catholics their rightful place in the corporations. A Municipal Reform Bill had been introduced into Parliament, in 1836, by O'Loughlen, then Attorney-General. He had stated in his speech, that "although the whole number of corporators in Ireland were thirteen thousand, and although since 1792 the corporations had been nominally open to Catholics, not more than two hundred had been admitted." The municipal bodies also, being quite free from popular control, and all other control, had become quite as conspicuous for corruption as for Protestantism; and, independently of the claims of the Catholics, some cleansing process was absolutely needful amongst

those dens of iniquity. The principle of the new bill was to give to the inhabitants of the towns (subject to a qualification according to rating) the power to elect town councillors, and thus infuse a popular element into the little close boroughs of municipal jurisdiction.

A Municipal Reform Bill had been within a few years enacted for England; and another object of the Government was to assimilate, as far as was prudent, the Irish institutions of this kind with the English. One great difficulty, however, at once presented itself. Some of the functions of municipal officers were connected with the administration of justice. The mayor is a magistrate. What is of still graver importance, the sheriff of a corporate city is the officer who has charge of the list of qualified *jurors* in that city, and who summons a certain number of them to serve at each assize or commission. If such sheriff should be a Catholic, there was reason to fear that he might not exercise due vigilance in keeping Catholics off those juries which might have to try "political offences"—a large and essential department of what is called "government" in Ireland.

Violent opposition was made to the bill on this and other grounds; and it was thrown out by the House of Lords. The agitation, however, was quite vehement on the subject in Ireland; and the demand for corporate reform grew loud. While the Marquis of Normanby was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he did not prevent and repress political meetings, as he was invested with power to do; and the Whig Ministry soon found they could not calculate on Catholic support (which they needed) without some measure of this character. During the three years, 1837-8-9, the bill underwent several modifications, and was several times passed by the Commons and thrown out by the Peers. At last it took its final shape, and was introduced by Lord Morpeth, on the 14th of February, 1840. In his bill, the amount of *rating* fixed as the qualification for voters was £8. When it was sent up to the Lords, they insisted upon the qualification of a £10 rating; and with this change it was accepted by the Commons, and became law.\*

The Municipal Reform Act would have been indeed an invaluable concession of right and equity to Ireland; and we should here be called upon to greatly modify or retract very much of the bitter reflections which have been made upon the deadly hostility shown by all British

\* 3 and 4 Victoria, cap. 118.



Governments against the Irish people, but for one circumstance. A clause of the new Act not only renders all the rest comparatively worthless, but provides with deliberate malignity for the subversion of all law and justice in Ireland. It enacts that the Sheriff shall not be elected by the Town Councils, as in England, but appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant; that is to say, the Town Councils were to be allowed to submit certain names to that functionary, amongst whom they should pray him to appoint their Sheriff; and if none of the names pleased him, the nomination was to rest with him; that is to say, the officer who had charge of the jury lists, and whose special duty it is to take care that his fellow citizens are fairly represented in the jury box, was to be not an elected servant of the people, but a creature of the Castle and the Crown. There is no occasion for hesitation or delicacy in affirming that the intention of this clause was to enable the Crown to pack its juries with the utmost certainty, and to destroy a political opponent at any time, under a false pretence of law. To what deadly use this provision has been turned will be but too evident throughout the later history of the country. In the meantime, however, the Catholic townsmen of Ireland took their place in the municipal bodies, and in such municipal business as had no reference to the administration of justice. O'Connell was elected first Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin, and took much state in his scarlet cloak and gold chain; but at the same moment was nominated a Sheriff, whose business it was to secure a jury that would send this Lord Mayor to jail on the first occasion when the Castle might desire to imprison him as a criminal.

These three measures were the first-fruits of Whig legislation for Ireland, in the first three years of Queen Victoria.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1840—1843.

Spirit of Legislation for Ireland—More Spying in the Post-Office—Savings Banks—"Precursor's Society" support to the Whigs—Whigs go out—Peel comes in—Repeal Association—Export of Food—Extermination—The Repeal Year—Corporation Debate—The Younger Nationalists—New "Arms Bill"—O'Brien moves for Inquiry—Preparations for Coercion—All England against Repeal—Monster Meetings—Mallow—Tarra—Mullaghmast—Clontarf—Proclamation.

WE can now appreciate in some measure the spirit and motive of all the legislation

for Ireland after "Emancipation." Catholics having been admitted into Parliament and into the Corporations, it became necessary, in the interest of British domination, to take securities against the employment of the new franchises for any Irish purpose. By the "National Education" system, provision was made for stifling all national sentiment in the young. By the Poor law, the life or death of certain millions of the people was placed at the disposal of British officials. By the Tithe law the impositions of the Established Church were rendered inevitable. By the Municipal law the perpetual packing of juries was made certain. Every enactment of the British Parliament was expressly designed and admirably calculated to nullify altogether the sentiments and aspirations of the Irish people, and to subject their whole way of life to the will and the interests of England. The police force had been gradually converted into a standing army, under the absolute control of the Castle. The post-office *espionage* had been systematized and perfected. Government officers were trained to open letters and re-seal them, without showing any trace of their manipulation; and Her Majesty's Lords-Lieutenant read the correspondence of all suspected persons. In 1834 it was Mr. Secretary Littleton (afterwards Lord Hatherton) who inspected men's letters. In 1835 it was Lord Mulgrave (afterwards Marquis of Normanby) who discharged this needful office. The next year it was the same noble Marquis, and the Irish Secretary, Mr. Drummond—the man who scandalized the whole British interest in Ireland by a casual observation of his (which, however, he did not mean), that "property had its duties as well as its rights." It was this Mr. Drummond who was the spy upon our correspondence both in 1836 and 1837. In the same year (1837) it appears that both Lord-Chancellor Plunket, one of the Lords-Justices, and Doctor Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, a member of the Privy-Council, had a curiosity to know what Mr. O'Connell and others might be writing about to their friends. They therefore gave directions that the letters to and from that gentlemen, and all the other gentlemen named in their orders (we are not told who they were), should be opened in the post-office, softening the seals or envelopes by a cunning application of steam, then copied for the study of those functionaries, and then sealed up again with great skill. In 1838 Lord Morpeth (afterwards Lord Carlisle) had the opening of our letters. In 1839 the Mar-



quis of Normanby, Lord Ebrington, and General Sir T. Blakeney, one of the Lords-Justices. In 1840 Lord Ebrington again freely indulged his curiosity.\*

When to all these methods of inspection and control we add the immense police force—about thirteen thousand men, well armed and scientifically distributed over the whole island—with their complete code of signals for communicating from station to station, with blue lights, red lights, and other apparatus. When we add the numerous corps of *detectives* (a sort of institution in which Great Britain is unmatched in all the world), and when we remember the Disarming Acts and Coercion Acts always in force,† it is easy to understand how the unfortunate Irish nation, bound hand and foot, muzzled, disarmed, and half starved, could but writhe helplessly under the lash of its greedy tyrant. Yet the picture of these engines of subjugation is not complete without an account of the *savings banks*. These institutions were the only means left to industrious and frugal people by which they could safely invest their savings. Manufacturing industry was out of the question; land in small lots was not to be had; even leases for lives or years were no longer obtained (for there was now no use for small freeholders at the hustings), and those who could save a little money could do no better than deposit it in the savings bank of the nearest town. The system of savings banks had been introduced from Scotland into Ireland in 1810. Soon after, it had been made a Government institution, and the rate of interest was fixed by law. The depositors were allowed £3, 0s. 10d. per cent.; and the savings bank was bound to invest the whole of the money deposited with it in the *Government funds*. Thus the small savings of every industrious artizan, and of every prudent maid-servant, were in the hands of the Government; and their value depended upon the value of the Government funds—that is, on the credit and stability of the existing British system. This was a substantial security against revolution, because every depositor felt that his little all depended on the tranquillity of the State: in other words, on the peaceful perpetuation of the hateful system which was really making beggars of them all.

It must be admitted that, in so very helpless a condition of the country, it was a difficult task for even the most powerful and popular agitator to produce any move-

\* Parliamentary Return. Session of 1845. Papers relating to Mazzini.

† Lord Grey's Coercion Act remained in force till 1839. It was soon succeeded by another Coercion Act.

ment that would be really formidable to the enemy's government, or would exert any serious pressure upon their action. O'Connell was, for several years, in a state of manifest perplexity and indecision. He always knew and felt, it is true, that the repeal of the Union—the destruction of the British empire—was the only salvation for his country. But that British empire was now on its guard at all points. Besides, the governing faction at that moment was Whig; full of fine, liberal professions, always employed in some fraudulent pretence of friendly legislation for Ireland, and even courting him and his influence for its own party purposes. It is not to be wondered at, then, that when the Liberal Lord Melbourne was Prime Minister, and the more than Liberal Lord Normanby and Lord Ebrington were Viceroy of Ireland, who were willing to distribute a large share of the Government patronage on his recommendation (whilst they inspected his letters in the post-office), it cannot be thought strange that he held in abeyance for a time the real and rightful claims of Irish nationhood, and gave a certain qualified support to the "Liberal" administration which bestowed profitable offices on his friends. It was at this period that the Tories accused the Government of truckling to O'Connell, and that the thoroughgoing nationalists of Ireland accused O'Connell of trafficking with the Whigs; and, in fact, this was the most questionable part of his whole political career.

Yet O'Connell was too much devoted to the cause of his country to sell it to any English party. He insisted no longer on the restoration of a native legislature, but loudly claimed "justice to Ireland," and affected to believe that these Whig statesmen would consent to such justice. Thereupon he established a new agitating association, which he called by the peculiar name of "Precursor Society," in the beginning of 1839. The meaning of the name was, that Ireland was now making a last appeal for "justice," and that if this were still denied, the existing Society was but the precursor of a new and universal agitation for repeal of the Union. In the meantime, all the influence of the organization was to be used in support of the Whig administration. "What am I here for?" exclaimed O'Connell, at a meeting on the 6th of March, 1839, "What am I here for? To call on all Ireland to rally round the Ministry; to call for my two millions of enrolled Precursors."

Lord Normanby, while in secret he pried into everybody's letters, omitted in public none of the usual arts of popularity. He



procured places for Catholic lawyers; he dismissed from the commission of the peace Colonel Verner, and other outrageous Orange magistrates, for publicly celebrating that ruffianly slaughter called Battle of the Diamond; he received Catholic notabilities at the Castle with distinguished courtesy; he made excursions through the provinces, and liberated from the jails great numbers of prisoners who were either unjustly confined or undergoing punishment for trifling offences. At length English opinion became inflamed against him; and Lord Brougham (who had entirely abandoned all pretence to Liberalism when Ireland was in question) moved a vote of censure against Lord Normanby in the House of Lords, on the express ground of an abuse of patronage and of the pardoning power. It appeared in the debate that his lordship had, between November, 1837, and the 31st January, 1839, released eight hundred and twenty-two prisoners—but not without inquiry into their cases, and not without rejecting appeals for clemency amounting to nearly as large a number. The vote of censure passed, however. Lord Normanby retired from the Viceroyalty, and was succeeded in 1839 by Lord Ebrington, another Liberal, who lost no time in commencing his duties as post-office spy,—which, indeed, he continued faithfully to discharge during the whole period of his government.

The "Precursor" Association continued its meetings at the Corn Exchange, on Burgh Quay, and Mr. O'Connell regularly, once a week, while he demanded justice to Ireland, called on the people to sustain the Whig Government.

This anomalous political situation ended in November, 1841. The Whig administration went out; and Sir Robert Peel, the proved and inveterate enemy of Ireland and of the Catholics, became Prime Minister. There was to be no more patronage at the disposal of the Corn Exchange; no more pretext for affecting to expect justice for Ireland at the hands of an English Government; and the Precursor Society merged into the *Repeal Association*.

For the next two years this new organization attracted but little attention in England, or even at home. The country had become so much accustomed to Mr. O'Connell's successive forms of agitation, that it would have surprised nobody if the Repeal Association had been upon any morning "proclaimed" out of existence, or if its versatile author had again changed its name and character, and called it the "Liberal Association," or "Justice to

Ireland Association." But, in truth, no person could be more fully sensible than Mr. O'Connell that there was no justice for Ireland save in national independence. For full thirty years he had constantly avowed this creed; and if he had waived the claim for awhile, it was only to aid and encourage the Whigs in granting what he called "instalments" of justice, which might strengthen the nation to demand and enforce all that was due; or in putting "good men" into office, who, he said, were certainly better than bad men. Now, at last, he felt himself standing upon the only plain and honest principle, engaged in the only agitation by which his countrymen would be really stirred and fired to the very heart's core.

Nothing important took place during these two years. Mr. O'Connell was now Lord Mayor of Dublin, and held his levees in state at the Mansion House, while the Lord-Lieutenant was studying his private letters to find matter of accusation against him. The people were pleased to see their chosen chief adorned with the splendid corporate *insignia*, so long appropriated by the "Ascendancy," and did not yet perceive how firmly, instead of that old "Ascendancy," British domination was fastened upon them.

In 1843, more than three million quarters of grain were exported out of Ireland into England; besides almost a million head of live stock, including horned cattle, sheep, and swine.\*

In 1843 extermination of tenantry was sweeping and destructive; and the emigration of "surplus population" from Ireland reached nearly one hundred thousand.

From a Londonderry newspaper of this year we extract an advertisement, signed by one M'Mullin, "Emigration Agent," which will show what was going on throughout Ireland better than particular details could do:—

NOTICE.—A favourable opportunity presents itself, in the course of the present month, for Quebec, to gentlemen residing in the Counties of Londonderry, Donegal, Tyrone, or Fermanagh, who wish to send out to the Canadas the *overstock tenantry* belonging to their estates—as a moderate rate of passage will be taken, and six months' credit given for a lump sum to any gentleman requiring such accommodation, &c.

The mode in which the overstock tenantry are persuaded in Ireland to embark for America is ejecting them, and pulling down their houses. And in 1843, and many years before, and every year since, this process has been going on so extensively and notoriously that there will be

\* Thom's *Official Directory*. This is quite an under estimate.



no further occasion to refer to it, until we arrive at what the British call the "Famine."

In 1843, the rental of Ireland, carried off to be spent abroad, amounted (according to Mr. Smith O'Brien's estimate) to five millions sterling; and the peasantry, whose industry created all the wealth of the country, were proverbially known throughout the earth as "the worst fed, the worst clothed, and the worst housed peasantry in Europe."

The poor houses, which had been built under the new law, were all full. The farmers were paying their tithes to the landlords, with no possibility of escape—for the bailiffs were always at the door—and the tithe was levied along with the rent. The "national schools" were teaching Irish children that there is no such thing as nationality, and that it is a blessed privilege to be born "a happy English child." Thus, the mature and highly elaborated policy of the enemy towards Ireland was in full and successful operation at every point, when, in the spring of 1843, O'Connell announced that it was the *repeal year*, and proceeded to infuse into that movement an energy and power greater than any of his organizations had ever possessed, even in the days of the old Catholic Association.

First, he asked for three millions of enrolled repealers in the Repeal Association; and confidently promised, and perhaps fully believed, that no English Administration would venture to resist that great measure so enforced. The more thoroughly to arouse the people, he declined to go over to London to take his seat in Parliament (many other members following his example), and resolved to hold multitudinous meetings in every corner of the island.

First, he moved, in the Dublin Corporation, a resolution for the adoption of a petition to Parliament demanding a Repeal of the Union with England—that is to say, demanding back the Irish Parliament, which had been extinguished in 1800,—so that Ireland should once more have her own House of Peers and House of Commons; the Sovereign of England to be also Sovereign of Ireland. His speech was masterly, and covered the whole case. He cited the ablest jurists to show that the so-called Union was in law a nullity; reminded his audience of what was at any rate notorious and never denied, that—supposing the two Parliaments competent to pass such an Act—it had been obtained by fraud and open bribery; an open market of bribery, of which the accounts are extant—viz., £1,275,000 paid to pro-

prietors for the purchase of nomination boroughs, at £15,000 per borough (which seats were immediately filled by English officers and clerks); more than one million sterling expended on mere bribes, the tariff being quite familiar, £8,000 for an Union vote, or an office worth £2,000 a year, if the member did not like to touch the ready money; twenty Peerages, ten Bishoprics, one Chief-Justiceship, six Puisne Judgeships—not to count regiments and ships given to officers in the army and navy, all dispensed as direct payment for the vote. He reminded them that the right of holding public meetings to protest against all this was taken away during the time the Union was in agitation; that county meetings, convened by High Sheriffs of counties, as in Tipperary and Queen's County, were dispersed by troops; martial law was in force, and the *Habeas Corpus* Act suspended; that, in 1800, the number of soldiers concentrated in that small island was one hundred and twenty-nine thousand, as "good lookers-on;" that notwithstanding all intimidation, seven hundred thousand persons had petitioned against the measure; and notwithstanding all enticements, only three thousand had petitioned for it—most of these being Government officials and prisoners in the jails. If he had stopped here, most persons would think it enough: that was a deed which at the earliest possible moment must be undone and punished.

But he did not stop here. He went into all the details of ruined trade and manufactures since the Union;—immensely increased drains in the shape of absentee rents and surplus taxation; frauds in subjecting Ireland to a charge for the *English* national debt; and even charging to Ireland's special account the very moneys expended in bribes and military expenses for carrying the Union—which, he said, was about as fair as "making Ireland pay for the knife with which Lord Castlereagh cut his throat;" injustice in giving Ireland but one hundred members in the House of Commons, while her population and revenue entitled her to one hundred and seventy-five; and, above all, the injustice of fixing the qualification of *electors* of these members much higher in Ireland, the poorer country, than in England.

This is a sketch only of the case for repeal of the Union; the necessity for some remedy or other was only too apparent in the poverty and wretchedness which moved and scandalized all Europe.

The petition for repeal was adopted by a vote of forty-one to fifteen in the Cor-



poration; and a similar petition, shortly after, by the Corporation of Cork. Hitherto the English press, and Irish press in the English interest, looked on with affected or real indifference and contempt.

O'Connell then left Dublin for the provinces. Then began the series of vast open-air meetings, to which the peasantry, accompanied by their priests, repeal wardens, and "temperance bands," flocked in numbers varying from fifty thousand to two hundred and fifty thousand (we take the reduced and disparaging estimate of enemies, but the repeal newspapers put up the Tara meeting to four hundred thousand). Of course, the orator always addressed these multitudes, but though his voice was the most powerful of his day, he could not be heard by a tenth of them. Neither did they come to hear. They were all well indoctrinated by local repeal wardens; had their minds made up, and came to convince their leader that they were with him, and would be ready at any time when called upon.

But all was to be peaceable; they were to demand their rights imperatively; they were, he assured them, tall men and strong; at every monster meeting he had around him, as he often said, the materials of a greater army than both the armies combined that fought at Waterloo. "But take heed," he cried, "not to misconceive me. Is it by force or violence, bloodshed or turbulence, that I shall achieve this victory, dear above all earthly considerations to my heart? No! perish the thought for ever. I will do it by legal, peaceable, and constitutional means alone—by the electricity of public opinion, by the moral combination of good men, and by the enrolment of four millions of repealers. I am a disciple of that sect of politicians who believe that *the greatest of all sublunary blessings is too dearly purchased at the expense of a single drop of human blood.*"

Many persons did not understand this sort of language. The prevailing impression was, that while the Repeal Association was, indeed, a peaceable body, contemplating only "constitutional agitation," yet the parade of such immense masses of physical force had an ulterior meaning, and indicated that if the British Parliament remained absolutely insensible to the reasonable demands of the people, the Association must be dissolved; and the next question would be, How best and soonest to exterminate the British forces. Many who were close to O'Connell expected all along that the English Parliament and Government never would yield; and these would have taken small interest

in the movement, if it was never to go beyond speeches and cheers.

Meanwhile, nothing could be more peaceful, orderly, and good-humoured than the meetings. Father Mathew's temperance reformation had lately been working its wonders, and all the people were sober and quiet; repeal wardens everywhere organized an "O'Connell Police," with wands; and any person of the whole immense multitude who was even noisy, was instantly and quietly removed. The Government, indeed, soon took alarm, or affected to do so, for the peace of the country; and they sent large forces of armed constabulary to bivouac on the ground; but there never was the slightest excuse for interference.

The movement of the people, throughout this whole summer, was profound and sweeping; it carried along with it the Catholic clergy, though in many cases against their will; but they were of the people, bound up with the people, dependent on the people, and found it their best policy to move not only with the people, but at their head. The Catholic bishops and archbishops gave in their adhesion, and began to take the chair at meetings; the French and German press began to notice the struggle, and eagerly watch how England would deal with it. At last, on April 27th, Mr. Lane Fox, a Tory member of Parliament, gave notice, "That it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to take immediate steps to put an end to the agitation for repeal;" and on the same day, Lord Eliot, Chief Secretary for Ireland, gave notice of a bill "for the regulation of arms in Ireland." At the same moment the funds fell one and a half per cent.

The first threat of coercion brought important accessions to the ranks of the repealers; and the monster meetings became now more monstrous than ever; but, if possible, even gayer and more good-humoured.

Mr. O'Connell affected to treat very lightly all these menaces of violence. His sarcasm was bitter, his reason irrefragable, his array multitudinous in its peaceful might; but, in the meantime, Lord Eliot was preparing his Arms Bill; and, on the 9th of May, the Duke of Wellington in the Lords, and Sir Robert Peel in the Commons, declared that all the resources of the empire should be exerted to preserve the Union; and Sir Robert Peel added, quoting Lord Althorpe, that, deprecating civil war as he did, he should hold civil war preferable to the "dismemberment of the empire." Mr. Bernal [Osborne] instantly asked Sir Robert, as



he cited Lord Althorpe's words, "whether he would abide by another declaration of that noble lord—namely, that if all the members for Ireland should be in favour of repeal, he would consider it his duty to grant it?" And Sir Robert replied: "I do not recollect that Lord Althorpe ever made any such declaration; but if he did, *I am not prepared to abide by it.*"

At this point, issue was joined. The majority of the Irish nation desired to undo the Union with England; but England declared that, if all Ireland demanded that measure, England would rather drown the demand in blood.

The new Association for Repeal contained many men of great ability and influence. Mr. Shiel, indeed, though he had publicly declared himself in favour of repealing the Union, had desisted from all active agitation after the Catholic Relief Bill. He never entered at all into this new repeal movement, perhaps because he knew it meant war, and knew O'Connell would never fight; perhaps because he chose to identify himself with the higher class of Catholics, who thought enough had been done, and "called it freedom when themselves were free;" perhaps because he was somewhat intolerant of O'Connell's autocratic sway—for, like every great leader of a democracy, the agitator was a most despotic disciplinarian in ruling the movement he had created. Up to the time of the Ministerial declaration against repeal in April, very few members of Parliament were actual members of the Association; but amongst them was Henry Grattan, member for Meath, who brought to its ranks an illustrious name, if nothing else of great value. O'Brien still stood aloof.

But within this same Association there was a certain smaller Association, composed of very different men. Its head and heart was Thomas Davis, a young Protestant lawyer of Cork County, who had been previously known only as a scholar and antiquarian—a zealous member of the Royal Irish Academy, and of the Archæological Society. In the autumn of '42, he and his friend Dillon had projected the publication of a weekly literary and political journal of the highest class, to sustain the cause of Irish nationhood, to give it a historic and literary interest which would win and inspire the youth of the country, and, above all, to conciliate Protestants by stripping the agitation of a certain suspicion of sectarianism, which, though disavowed by O'Connell, was naturally connected with it by reason of the antecedents of its chief.

So commenced the *Nation* newspaper; which, for several years, was, next to

O'Connell, the strongest power on the national side. Its editor was Mr. Duffy, but Thomas Davis was its chief writer. By his ardent temperament, amiable character, and high accomplishments, he soon gathered around him a gifted circle of educated young men—both Protestant and Catholic—whose headquarters was the *Nation* office, and whose chief bond of union was their warm attachment to their friend. It was the one grand object of these men—and it was grand—to lift up the Irish cause high above both Catholic claims and Protestant pretensions, and unite all sects, in the one character of "Irishmen," to put an end to English domination. Their idea was precisely the idea of the United Irishmen; although their mode of action was very different. Mr. Davis and his friends soon received the nickname of "Young Ireland," which designation they never themselves assumed nor accepted.

O'Connell knew well, and could count, this small circle of literary privateer repealers; he felt that he was receiving, for the present, a powerful support from them—the *Nation* being by far the ablest organ of the movement; but he knew, also, that they were outside of his influence, and did not implicitly believe his confident promises that repeal would be yielded to "agitation;" that they were continually seeking by their writings to arouse a military spirit among the people; and had most diligently promoted the formation of temperance bands, with military uniforms, the practice of marching to monster meetings in ranks and squadrons, with banners, and the like; showing plainly, that while they helped the Repeal Association, they fully expected that the liberties of the country must be *fought* for at last. O'Connell, therefore, suspected and disliked them; but could not well quarrel with them. Apparently they worked in perfect harmony; and during all this "repeal year" few were aware how certainly that alliance must end. Personally they sought no notoriety; and the *Nation* was as careful to swell O'Connell's praise, and make him the sole figure to which all eyes should turn, as any of his own creatures could be. O'Connell accepted their services to convert the "gentry" and the Protestants: they could not dispense with O'Connell to stir and wield the multitudinous people.

It has been mentioned that on the same day when the Ministers declared, in the Queen's name, that the Union must, at all hazards, be maintained, Lord Eliot introduced a new "Arms Bill" for Ireland. This new bill was recommended



by Lord Eliot, in the House of Commons, by the remark, "that it was substantially similar to what had been the law in Ireland for half a century" (June 15th); and again (June 26th), "He would ask the noble lord to compare it with the bill of 1838, and to point out the difference. In fact, this was milder." This mild Act, then, provided, That no man could keep arms of any sort, without first having a certificate from two householders, "rated to the poor" at above £20, and then producing that certificate to the justices at sessions (said justices being all appointed by the Crown, and all sure men); and then, if the justices permitted the applicant to keep arms at all, they were to be registered and *branded* by the police. After that they could not be removed, sold, or inherited without new registry. And every conversation respecting these arms in which a man should not tell truly whatever he might be asked by any policeman, subjected the delinquent to penalties. To have a pike or spear, "or instrument serving for a pike or spear," was an offence punishable by transportation for seven years. Domiciliary visits by the police might be ordered by any magistrate "on suspicion," whereupon any man's house might be broken into by day or night, and his very bed searched for concealed arms. Blacksmiths were required to take out licenses similar to those for keeping arms, and under the same penalties, in order that the workers in so dangerous a metal as iron might be known and approved persons. And, to crown the code, if any weapon should be found in any house, or out-house, or stack-yard, the occupier was to be convicted unless he could prove that it was there without his knowledge.

Such had been "substantially the law of Ireland for half a century." The idea of arms had come to be associated in the people's minds with handcuffs, jails, petty-sessions, and transportation; a good device for killing the manly spirit of a nation.

The Disarming Act passed into a law, of course by large majorities. It was in vain that some Irish members resisted. In vain Mr. Smith O'Brien, then member for Limerick, moved that instead of meeting the discontent of Ireland with a new Arms Bill, the House should resolve itself into a committee "to consider the cause of the discontent with a view to the redress of grievances." O'Brien, who was afterwards to play so conspicuous a part, was not yet a repealer. He had been for twenty years one of the most industrious members of Parliament, and was

attached, on most questions, to the Whig party. His speech, however, on this motion showed that he regarded it as a last effort to obtain any approach to justice in a British Parliament, and that if they still resolutely adhered to the policy of coercion, and nothing but coercion, he would very shortly be found by O'Connell's side.

He pointed out the facts which justified discontent; that the Union made Ireland poor and kept her poor; that it encouraged the absenteeism of landlords, and so caused a great rental to be spent in England; that nearly a million sterling of "surplus revenue" over what was expended in the government of Ireland was annually remitted from the Irish to the English exchequer; that Irish manufactures had ceased, and the profits on all the manufactured articles consumed in that island came to England; that the tenantry had no permanent tenure or security that they would derive benefit by any improvements they might make; that Ireland had but one hundred and five members of Parliament, whereas her population and revenue together entitled her to one hundred and seventy-five; that the municipal laws of the two countries were not the same. Then the new "Poor Law" was a failure, and was increasing the wretchedness and hunger of the people; and the right honourable gentleman (Sir R. Peel) had now declared his *ultimatum*; he declared that "conciliation had reached its limits, and that the Irish should have an Arms Bill, and nothing but an Arms Bill" (speech of July 4th, 1843).

His facts were not disputed. Nobody in Parliament pretended to say that anything in this long catalogue was overstated; but the House refused the committee of inquiry, would discuss no grievances, and proceeded with their Arms Bill.

It has been said, indeed, that these excessive precautions to keep arms out of the hands of the Irish people testified the high esteem in which the military spirit of that people was held in England; and in this point of view the long series of Arms Acts may be regarded as a compliment. In truth, the English had some occasion to know that the Irish make good soldiers. In this very month of July, 1843, for example, a British general fought the decisive battle of Meeanee, by which the Ameers of Scinde were crushed. While the bill for disarming Ireland was pending, far off on the banks of the Indus Napier went into action with less than three thousand troops against twenty-five



thousand, only four hundred of his men being "British" soldiers; but those four hundred were a Tipperary regiment—the Twenty-second—and they did their work in such style as made the gray old warrior shout aloud, "Magnificent Tipperary!"

Along with the new Arms Act several additional regiments, mostly of English and Scotch troops, were sent to Ireland; and several war-steamers, with a fleet of gun-brigs, were sent to cruise round the coast. Barracks began to be fortified and loop-holed, and police-stations were furnished with iron-grated windows. It was quite evident that the English Government intended, on the first pretext of provocation, to make a salutary slaughter.

In the meantime the vast monster meetings continued, with even intenser enthusiasm, but always with perfect peace and order. "Whom are they going to fight?" O'Connell would exclaim; "We are not going to fight them. We are unarmed, we meet peacefully to demand our country's freedom. There is no bloodshed, no drunkenness even, or ill-humour. Hurrah for the Queen, God bless her!"

The speeches of O'Connell at these meetings, though not heard by a fourth of the multitudes, were carefully reported, and flew over all Ireland, and England too, in hundreds of newspapers, so that probably no speeches ever delivered in the world had so wide an audience. The people began to neglect altogether the proceedings of Parliament, and felt that their cause was to be tried at home. More and more of the Irish members of Parliament discontinued their attendance in London and gathered round O'Connell. Many of those who still went to London were called on by their constituents to come home or resign.

Sir Edward Sugden was then Lord-Chancellor of Ireland, and he began offensive operations on the British side, by depriving of the commission of the peace all magistrates who joined the Repeal Association, or took the chair at a repeal meeting. He had dismissed in this way about twenty, including O'Connell and Lord French, usually accompanying the announcement of the *supersedeas* with an insolent letter, when Smith O'Brien wrote to him that he had been a magistrate for many years, that he was not a repealer, but could not consent to hold his commission on such humiliating terms. Instantly his example was followed by many gentlemen, who flung their commissions in the Chancellor's face, sometimes with letters as insulting as his own. And now O'Connell brought forward one of his grand schemes. It was to have all the

dismissed magistrates appointed "arbitrators," who should hold regular courts of arbitration in their respective districts—all the people pledging themselves to make no resort to the Queen's magistrates, but to settle every dispute by the award of their arbitrators. This was put into operation in many places, and worked very well.

In reply to questions in Parliament as to what they were concentrating troops in Ireland for, Peel and Wellington had said they did not mean to make war or attack anybody, but only to maintain the peace of the country.

It was very obvious that all England, and men of all parties and creeds in England, were fully resolved to resist, at any cost of blood and havoc, the claim for a repeal of the Union; and it must be admitted to have been a strange weakness on the part of O'Connell, if he really believed that the same sort of "agitation" which had extorted the Relief Bill could now coerce the prosperous and greedy British nation to yield up its hold upon Ireland. That Relief Act, it must be remembered, was a measure for the *consolidation* of the "British Empire;" it opened high official position to the wealthier Catholics and educated Catholic gentlemen, and thus separated their interest from that of the peasantry. But it was of the peasantry mainly that the Government had any apprehension, and British Ministers felt that Catholic Emancipation would place this peasantry more completely in their power than ever.

Besides, Emancipation had a strong party in its favour, both amongst Irish Protestants and in England; and in yielding to it England made no sacrifice except of her ancient grudge. To her it was positive gain. O'Connell did not bethink him that when his agitation should be directly aimed at the "integrity of the empire," and the supremacy of the British in Ireland, it would be a different matter.

One fact showed very plainly that Englishmen of all sorts regarded this repeal movement as a mortal stab aimed at the heart of the empire—the English Catholics were as bitterly hostile to Ireland, on this question, as the highest "No-Popery" Tories. Thus Lord Beaumont, an English Catholic Peer, who owed his seat in the House to O'Connell, thought himself called upon to denounce the repeal agitation. "Do you know who this Beaumont is?" asked O'Connell at his next meeting. "Why, the man's name is Martin Bree, though he calls himself Stapleton. His grandfather married a Stapleton for her



fortune, and then changed the name. He was a Stapleton when I emancipated him. I beg your pardon for having emancipated such a fellow."

For the last twenty years the English press has mocked at the whole repeal movement; and in Parliament it was never mentioned save with a jeer. In the summer of 1843 they neither laughed nor jeered. Sir James Graham, earnestly appealing to the House to refuse O'Brien's motion of inquiry, exclaimed:—

"Any hesitation now, any delay and irresolution, will multiply the danger a hundredfold. If Parliament expresses its sense in favour of the course pursued by Government, ministers have every hope that, with the confidence of the House, they will be enabled to triumph over all difficulties. I appeal, then, to both sides—not to one, but to both—I appeal to both sides, and say, if you falter now, if you hesitate now in repressing the rebellious spirit which is at work in the struggle of repeal, *the glory of the country is departed*—the days of its power are numbered; and England, this all-conquering England, must be classed with those countries *from whom power has dwindled away*, and present the melancholy aspect of a falling nation."

To refuse a committee of inquiry was reasonable enough; because Parliament, and all the people—men, women, and children—already knew all. The sole and avowed idea of the Government was, that to admit the idea of *anything* being wrong, would make the repeal movement altogether irresistible. The various projects now brought forward in England showed the perplexity of that country. Lord John Russell made an elaborate speech for conciliation; but the meaning of it seemed to be merely that it was no wonder Ireland was unquiet, seeing *he* was out of power. The grievance of Ireland, said he, in effect, is a Tory Ministry. Let her be ruled by us Whigs, and all will be well. Lord Brougham also gave it as his opinion that "you must purchase, not prosecute, repeal." The *Morning Chronicle* (Whig organ), in quite a friendly spirit, said, "Let us have a *perfect* Union; let us know each other; let the Irish judges come circuit in England, and let the English judges occasionally take the same round in Ireland," and so forth. "Is it absolutely certain," asked the *Westminster Review*, "that we can beat this people?" And the *Naval and Military Gazette*, a high military authority, thus expresses its apprehensions:—

"There are now stationed in Ireland thirty-five thousand men of all arms; but

widely scattered over the island. In the event of a rebellion (and who can say that we are not on the eve of one?) we feel great solicitude for the numerous small detachments of our gallant soldiers. . . . It is time to be up and doing. We have heard that the order and regularity of movement displayed by the divisions which passed before Mr. O'Connell, in review order, *en route* to Donnybrook lately, surprised many veteran officers, and led them to think that some *personal* training, in private and in small parties, must be practised. The ready obedience to the word of command, the silence while moving, and the general combinations, all prove organization to have gone a considerable length. In these trained bands our soldiers, split up into detached parties, would find no ordinary opponents; and we, therefore, hope soon to learn that all small parties have been called in, and that our regiments in Ireland are kept together and complete. That day, we fear, is near when '*quite peaceably*' every repealer will come armed to a meeting, to be held simultaneously as to day and hour all over the island, and then try to cut off quite peaceably every detachment of Her Majesty's loyal army."

What contributed to disquiet the British exceedingly was, that great and excited repeal meetings were held every week in American cities—meetings not only of Irish-born citizens, but of natives also—and considerable funds were remitted from thence to O'Connell's repeal exchequer.

"If something is not done," said Colonel Thomson, in the *Westminster*, "a fleet of steamboats from the United States will, some fine morning, be the Euthanasia of the Irish struggle."

We might cite many extracts from the press of France, exhibiting a powerful interest in what the French conceived to be an impending military struggle.

Take one from the *Paris Constitutional*:—

"When Ireland is agitated—when, at the sound of the powerful voice of O'Connell, four hundred thousand Irish assemble together in their meetings, and pronounce, as if it were by a single man, the same cry, and the same word—it is a grand spectacle which fills the soul, and which even at this distance moves the very strongest feelings of the heart, for it is the spectacle of an entire people who demand justice—of a people who have been despoiled of everything, even of the means of sustenance, and yet who require, with calmness and with firmness, the untrammelled exercise of their religion, and some



of the privileges of their ancient nationality."

Now, nobody, either in France or in the United States, would have given himself the trouble to watch that movement with interest, if they had not all believed that O'Connell and the Irish people meant to fight. Neither in America nor in France had men learned to appreciate "the ethical experiment of moral force." Clearly, also, the English expected a fight, and were preparing for it, and greatly preferred that mode of settling the difficulty (having a powerful army and navy ready), to O'Brien's method—inquiry, discussion, and redress—seeing that they were wholly unprovided with argument, and had no idea of giving redress.

It is also quite as clear that the Irish people then expected, and longed, and burned for battle, and never believed that O'Connell would adhere to his "peace policy" even in the last extremity. Still, as he rose in apparent confidence, and became more defiant in his tone, the people rallied more ardently around him; and thousands of quiet, resolute men flocked into the repeal cause, who had hitherto held back from all the agitations merely because they had always believed O'Connell insincere. They thought that the mighty movement which now surged up around him had whirled him into its own tempest at last, and that "the time was come."

No speech he ever uttered roused such a stormy tumult of applause as when, at Mallow "monster meeting," referring to the threats of coercion, and to an anxious Cabinet Council which had just been held, he said:—

"They spent Thursday in consulting whether they would deprive us of our rights, and I know not what the result of that council may be; but this I know, there was not an Irishman in the council. I may be told that the Duke of Wellington was there. Who calls him an Irishman? If a tiger's cub was dropped in a fold, would it be a lamb? But, perhaps, I am wrong in anticipating; perhaps I am mistaken in warning you. But is there reason to caution you? The council sat for an entire day, and even then did not conclude its deliberations, but adjourned to the next day, while the business of the country was allowed to stand still. What had they to deliberate about? The repealers were peaceable, loyal, and attached—affectionately attached—to the Queen, and determined to stand between her and her enemies. If they assailed us to-morrow, and that we conquered them—as conquer them we will one day—the

first use of that victory which we would make would be, to place the sceptre in the hands of her who has ever shown us favour, and whose conduct has ever been full of sympathy and emotion for our sufferings. Suppose, then, for a moment, that England found the Act of Union to operate not for her benefit; if, instead of decreasing her debt, it added to her taxation and liabilities, and made her burden more onerous; and if she felt herself entitled to call for a repeal of that Act, I ask Peel and Wellington, and let them deny it if they dare (and if they did they would be the scorn and by-word of the world), would she not have the right to call for a repeal of that Act? And what are Irishmen that they should be denied the same privilege? Have we not the ordinary courage of Englishmen? Are we to be trampled under foot? Oh, they shall never trample me, at least. I was wrong: they may trample me under foot—I say they may trample me, but it will be my dead body they will trample on, not the living man."

And a roar, two hundred thousand strong, rent the clouds. From that day the meetings went on increasingly in numbers, in regularity of training, and in highly-wrought excitement; until at Tara and at Mallaghmast the agitator shook with the passion of the scene, as the fiery eyes of three hundred thousand upturned faces seemed to crave *the word*.

Whig newspapers and politicians in England (the Whigs being then in opposition) began now to suggest various conciliatory measures—talked of the anomaly of the "Established Church"—and generally gave it to be understood that, if *they* were in power, they would know how to deal with the repeal agitation. At every meeting O'Connell turned these professions into ridicule. It was too late now, he said, to offer to buy up repeal by concessions or good measures. An Irish Parliament in College Green: this was his *ultimatum*.

We approach the end of the monster meetings. Neither England nor Ireland could bear this excitement much longer. The two grandest and most imposing of these parades were at Tara and Mullaghmast, both in the province of Leinster, within a short distance of Dublin; both conspicuous, the one in glory, the other in gloom, through past centuries, and haunted by ghosts of kings and chiefs.

On the great plain of Meath, not far from the Boyne river, rises a gentle eminence, in the midst of a luxuriant farming country. On and around its summit are still certain mouldering remains of earthen mounds and moats, the ruins of the "House



of Cormac," and the "Mound of the Hostages," and the "Stone of Destiny." It is Temora of the Kings. On Tuesday morning, the 15th of August, most of the population of Meath, with many thousands from the four counties round, were pouring along every road leading to the hill. Numerous bands, banners, and green boughs enlivened their march, or divided their ordered squadrons. Vehicles of all descriptions, from the handsome private chariot to the Irish jaunting-car, were continually arriving, and by the wardens duly disposed around the hill. In Dublin, the "Liberator," after a public breakfast, set forth at the head of a *cortège*, and his progress to Tara was a procession and a triumph. Under triumphal arches, and amidst a storm of music and acclamations, his carriage passed through the several little towns that lay in his way. At Tara, the multitudes assembled were estimated in the *Nation* at seven hundred and fifty thousand—an exaggeration, certainly. But they were at least three hundred and fifty thousand. Their numbers were not so impressive as their order and discipline; nor these so wonderful as the stifled enthusiasm that uplifted them above the earth. They came, indeed, with naked hands; but the agitator knew well that if he had invited them, they would have come still more gladly with extemporaneous pikes or spears, "or instruments serving for pikes and spears." He had been proclaiming from every hill top in Ireland for six months that *something was coming*—that repeal was "on the wild winds of Heaven." Expectation had grown intense, painful, almost intolerable. He knew it; and those who were close to him as he mounted the platform, noticed that his lip and hand visibly trembled, as he gazed over the boundless human ocean, and heard its thundering roar of welcome. He knew that every soul in that host demanded its enfranchisement at *his* hand.

O'Connell called this meeting "an august and triumphant meeting;" and as if conscious that he must at least seem to make another step in advance, he brought up at the next meeting of the Repeal Association a detailed "plan for the renewed action of the Irish Parliament," which, he said, it only needed the Queen's writs to put in operation. The new House of Commons was to consist of three hundred members, quite fairly apportioned to the several constituencies; and, in the meantime, he announced that he would invite three hundred gentlemen to assemble in Dublin, early in December, who were to come from every part of Ireland, and virtually represent their respective locali-

ties. This was the "Council of Three Hundred," about which he had often talked before in a vague manner; but had evidently great difficulty in bringing to pass *legally*. For it would be a "Convention of Delegates,"—and such an assembly, though legal enough in England, is illegal in Ireland. Conventions (like arms and ammunition) are held to be unsuitable to the Irish character. For, in fact, it was a convention which proclaimed the independence of Ireland in Dungannon, and the arms and ammunition of the volunteer army that made it good in 1782.

Two weeks after this the London Parliament was prorogued; and the Queen's speech (composed by Sir Robert Peel) was occupied almost entirely by two subjects—the disturbances in Wales and the repeal agitation in Ireland. There had been some rioting and bloodshed in Wales, in resistance to oppressive turnpike dues and the like; there was a quiet and legal expression of opinion in Ireland, unattended by the slightest outrage, demanding back the Parliament of the country. The Queen first dealt with Wales. She had taken measures, she said, for the repression of violence, *and*, at the same time, directed an inquiry to be made into the circumstances which led to it. As to Ireland, Her Majesty said, there was discontent and disaffection, but uttered not a word about any inquiry into the causes of that. "It had ever been her earnest desire," Her Majesty said, "to administer the government of that country in a spirit of strict justice and impartiality,"—and "she was firmly determined, under the blessing of Divine Providence, to maintain the Union."

The little principality of Wales was in open revolt—*there* Ministers would institute inquiry. Ireland was quiet, and standing upon the law—*there* they would meet the case with horse, foot, and artillery; for all knew that was what the Queen meant by "the blessing of Divine Providence."

Again the agitator mustered all Connaught at three monster meetings—in Roscommon, Clifden, and Loughrea. Again he asked them if they were for the repeal; and again the mountains and the sea-cliffs resounded with their acclaim. Yes, they were for the repeal; they had said so before. What next?

Leinster, too, was summoned again to meet on the 1st of October, at Mullaghmast, in Kildare County, near the road from Dublin to Carlow, and close on the borders of the Wicklow highlands.

This was the most imposing and effective of all the meetings. The spot was



noted as the scene of a massacre of some chiefs of Offaly and Leix, with hundreds of their clansmen, in 1577, by the English of the Pale, who had invited them to a great feast, but had troops silently drawn around the banqueting hall, who, at a signal, attacked the place and cut the throat of every wassailer. The hill of Mullaghinast, like that of Tara, is crowned by a rath, or ancient earthen rampart, inclosing about three acres.

The members of the town corporations repaired to the rath in their corporate robes. O'Connell took the chair in his scarlet cloak of alderman; and, amidst the breathless silence of the people, John Hogan, the first of Irish sculptors, came forward and placed on the Liberator's head a richly embroidered cap, modelled after the ancient Irish Crown, saying: "*Sir, I only regret this cap is not of gold.*" Then the deep roar of half a million voices, and the waving of at least a thousand banners, proclaimed the enthusiasm of the people. Again O'Connell assured them that England could not long resist these demonstrations of their peaceful resolve—that the Union was a nullity—that he had already arranged his plan for the new Irish Parliaments—and that this was the repeal year.

In truth, it was time for England either to yield with good grace, or to find or make some law applicable to this novel "political offence," or to provoke a fight and blow away repeal with cannon. Many of the Protestants were joining O'Connell; and even the troops in some Irish regiments had been known to throw up their caps with "hurrah for repeal!" It was high time to grapple with the "sedition."

Accordingly, the Government was all this time watching for an occasion on which it could come to issue with the agitation, and on which all advantages would be on its side. The next week that occasion arose. A great metropolitan meeting was appointed to be held on the historic shore of Clontarf, two miles from Dublin, along the bay, on Sunday the 8th of October. The garrison of Dublin amounted then to about four thousand men, besides the one thousand police; with abundance of field artillery.

Late in the afternoon on Saturday, when it was already almost dusk, a *proclamation* was posted on the walls of Dublin, signed by the Irish Secretary and Privy-Councillors, and the Commander of the Forces, forbidding the meeting; and charging all magistrates and officers, "and others whom it might concern, to be aiding and assisting in the execution of the law, in preventing said meeting."

"Let them not dare," O'Connell had often said, "to attack us!" The challenge was now to be accepted.

## CHAPTER XXII.

1843—1844.

Why England could not Yield—Cost to Her of Repeal—Intention of Government at Clontarf—The "Projected Massacre"—Meeting Prevented—State Prosecution—O'Brien declares for Repeal—Packing of the Jury—Verdict of *Guilty*—Debate in Parliament—Russell and Macaulay on Packing of Juries—O'Connell in Parliament—Speculation of the Whigs—Sentence and Imprisonment of "Conspirators"—Effects on Repeal Association—Appeal to the House of Lords—Whig Law Lords—Reversal of the Sentence—Enthusiasm of the People—Their Patience and Self-denial—Decline of the Association.

BRITISH Government then closed with repeal; and one or the other, it was plain, must go down.

For this was, in truth, the alternative.

The British empire, as it stands, looks vast and strong, but none know so well as the statesmen of that country how intrinsically feeble it is, and how entirely it depends for its existence upon *prestige*—that is, upon a superstitious belief in its power. England, in short, could by no means afford to part with her "sister island:" both in money and in credit the cost would be too much. In this repeal year, for example, there was an export of provisions from Ireland to England of the value of £16,000,000. And between surplus revenue remitted to England, and absentee rents spent in England, Mr. O'Connell's frequent statement that £9,000,000 of Irish money was annually spent in England, is not over the truth. These were substantial advantages, not to be yielded up lightly.

In point of national *prestige*, England could still less afford to repeal the Union, because all the world would know the concession had been wrung from her against her will. Whigs and Tories were of one mind upon *this*; and nothing can be more bitter than the language of all sections of the English press, after it was once determined to crush the agitation by force.

"A repeal," says the *Times*, "is not a matter to be argued on. It is a blow which despoils the Queen's domestic territory, splinters her crown, undermines and then crushes her throne, exposes her to insult and outrage from all quarters of the earth and ocean; a repeal of the Union leaves England stripped of her vitality. Whatever might be the inconvenience or disadvantage, therefore, or even unwhole-



some restraint upon Ireland—although the Union secures the reverse of all these—but even were it gall to Ireland, England must guard her own life's blood, and sternly tell the disaffected Irish: 'You shall have me for a sister or a subjugatrix; this is my *ultimatum*.'"

And the *Morning Chronicle*, speaking of the Act of "Union," says:—

"True, it was coarsely and badly done; but stand it must. A Cromwell's violence, with Machiavelli's perfidy, may have been at work; but the treaty, after all, is more than parchment."

The first bolt launched, then, was the proclamation to prevent the meeting at Clontarf. The proclamation was posted in Dublin only an hour before dusk on Saturday. But long before that time thousands of people from Meath, Kildare, and Dublin Counties were already on their way to Clontarf. They all had confidence in O'Connell's knowledge of law; and he had often told them (and it was true) that the meetings, and all the proceedings at them, were perfectly legal; and that a proclamation could not make them illegal. They would, therefore, have most certainly flocked to the rendezvous in the usual numbers, even if they had seen the proclamation.

Many persons did not at first understand the object of the Privy-Council in keeping back the proclamation to so late an hour on Saturday, seeing that the meeting had been many days announced; and they might as well have issued their command earlier in the week. One may also be at a loss to understand why the proclamation called not only upon all magistrates, and civil and military officers, to assist in preventing the assembly, but also "all others whom it might concern."

But the thing was simple enough. They meant to take O'Connell by surprise—so that he might be unable to prevent the assembly entirely, or to organize it (if such were his policy) for defence—and thus they hoped to create confusion and a pretext for an onslaught, or "salutary lesson." Besides, they had already made up their minds to arrest O'Connell and several others, and subject them to a State prosecution; and the Crown lawyers were already hard at work arranging a case against him. It is quite possible that they intended (should O'Connell go to Clontarf in the midst of such confusion and excitement) to arrest him then and there, which would have been certainly resisted by the people; and so there would have been a riot, and everything would have been lawful then. As to the "others whom it might concern," that meant the Orange

associations of Dublin, and everybody else who might take the invitation to himself. "Others whom it may concern!" exclaimed O'Connell. "Why, this is intended for, and addressed to Tresham Gregg and his auditory."\*

Thus, the enemy had well provided for confusion, collision, and a salutary lesson. Lord Cloncurry made no scruple to term the whole of these Government arrangements "a projected massacre."

For O'Connell and the committee of the Repeal Association there were but two courses possible: one to prevent the meeting, and turn the people back from it, if there was still time; the other was, for O'Connell to let the people of the country come to Clontarf—to meet them there himself as he had invited them, but, the troops being almost all drawn out of the city, to keep the Dublin repealers at home, and to give them a commission to take the Castle and all the barracks, and to break down the canal bridge, and barricade the streets leading to Clontarf. The whole garrison and police were five thousand. The city has a population of two hundred and fifty thousand. The multitudes coming in from the country would probably have amounted to almost as many; and that handful of men between. There would have been a horrible slaughter of the unarmed people without if the troops would fire on them—a very doubtful matter—and O'Connell himself might have fallen. But those who have well considered the destinies of Ireland since that day may reasonably enough be of the opinion that the death of five or ten thousand men at Clontarf might have saved Ireland the slaughter by famine of a hundred times as many shortly afterwards.

The first course was the one adopted. The committee issued another proclamation, and sent it off by parties of gentlemen known to the people, and on whom they would rely, to turn back the crowds upon all the roads by which they were likely to come in. All that Saturday night their exertions were unremitting; and the good Father Tyrrell, whose parishioners, swarming in from Fingal, would have made a large part of the meeting, by his exertions and fatigue that night, fell sick and died. The meeting was prevented. The troops were marched out, and drawn up on the beach and on the hill; the artillery was placed in a position to rake the place of meeting, and the cavalry ready to sweep it; but they met no enemy.

Within a week, O'Connell and eight

\* Rev. Tresham Gregg was then the Orange agitator, on whom had fallen the mantle of Sir Harcourt Lees.



others were held to bail to take their trial for "conspiracy and other misdemeanours."

O'Connell, on his side, laughed both at the "Clontarf war" and at the State trials. He seemed well pleased with them both. The one proved how entirely under discipline were the virtuous, and sober, and loyal people, as he called them. The other would show how wisely he had steered the agitation through the rocks and shoals of law. In this he would have been perfectly right, his legal position would have been impregnable, but for two circumstances — *first*, "conspiracy" in Ireland means anything the Castle judges wish; *second*, the Castle Sheriff was quite sure to pack a Castle jury, so that, whatever the Castle might desire, the jury would affirm on oath, "so help them God!" The jury system in Ireland we shall have occasion, more than once, to explain hereafter.

For the next eight months—that is, until the end of May, 1844—the State prosecution was the grand concern around which all public interest in Ireland concentrated itself. The prosecuted "conspirators" were nine in number—Daniel O'Connell; his son, John O'Connell, M.P. for Kilkenny; Charles Gavan Duffy, Editor of the *Nation*; the Rev. Mr. Tyrrell, of Lusk, County Dublin (he died while the prosecution was pending); the Rev. Mr. Tierney, of Clontibret, County Monaghan; Richard Barrett, Editor of the *Pilot*, Dublin; Thomas Steele, "Head Pacificator of Ireland;" Thomas M. Ray, Secretary of the Repeal Association; and Dr. Gray, Editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin.

During all the eight months of these legal proceedings, the repeal agitation continued to gain strength and impetus. The open-air meetings, indeed, ceased (Clontarf was to have been the last of them), owing to the approach of winter. But the new hall, which had been built as a place of meeting for the Association, was just finished; and O'Connell, who had a peculiar taste in nomenclature, christened it "Conciliation Hall;" intending to indicate the necessity for uniting all classes and religions in Ireland in a common struggle for the independence of their common country.

On the 22d of October the new hall was opened in great form and amidst great enthusiasm. The chair was taken by John Augustus O'Neill, of Bunowen Castle, a Protestant gentleman, who had been early in life a cavalry officer, and member of Parliament for Hull, in England. Letters from Lord French, Sir Charles Wolesley, Sir Richard Musgrave, and Mr. Caleb Powell, one of

the members for Limerick County, were read and placed on the minutes—all breathing vehement indignation against the "Government," and pledging the warmest support. But this first meeting in the new hall was specially notable for the adhesion of Mr. Smith O'Brien. Nothing encouraged the people, nothing provoked and perplexed the enemy, so much as this.

For O'Brien was not only a member of the great and ancient house of Thomond, but was further well known as a man both of calmness and resolution. The family had been Protestant for some generations; and Smith O'Brien, though always zealous in promoting everything which might be useful to Ireland in Parliament, had remained attached to the Whig party, and was hardly expected to throw himself into the national cause so warmly, and at so dangerous a time.

It has been already related how this excellent and gallant Irishman had flung to the Lord Chancellor his commission of the peace, when that functionary began to dismiss magistrates for attending peaceful meetings. He now saw that the British Government had commenced the deliberate task of crushing down a just national claim in the blood of the Irish people. The letter in which he announced his adhesion was extremely moderate; and it produced the deeper impression upon that account. One passage of it is highly characteristic of the writer. He says:—

"Lest I should be led to form a precipitate decision, I availed myself of the interval which followed the close of the session to examine whether, among the governments of central Europe, there are any so indifferent to the interests of their subjects as England has been to the welfare and happiness of our population. After visiting Belgium and all the principal capitals of Germany, I returned home impressed with the sad conviction that there is more human misery in one County in Ireland than throughout all the populous cities and districts which I had visited. On landing in England I learn that the Ministry, instead of applying themselves to remove the causes of complaint, have resolved to deprive us even of the liberty of discontent,—that public meetings are to be suppressed, and that State prosecutions are to be carried on against Mr. O'Connell and others, on some frivolous charges of sedition and conspiracy.

"I should be unworthy to belong to a nation which may claim, at least, as a characteristic virtue, that it exhibits



formation of that club commenced a new epoch in the politics of Ireland. At length, after a stay of about three weeks, which I look back upon as perhaps the pleasantest in my life, Russell and I returned to Dublin with instructions to cultivate the leaders in the popular interest, being Protestants, and, if possible, to form in the capital a club of United Irishmen. Neither Russell nor myself was known to one of those leaders; however, we soon contrived to get acquainted with James Napper Tandy, who was the principal of them, and through him with several others, so that in a little time we succeeded, and a club was accordingly formed, of which the Honourable Simon Butler was the first chairman, and Tandy the first secretary. The club adopted the declaration of their brethren of Belfast, with whom they immediately opened a correspondence. It is but justice to an honest man who has been persecuted for his firm adherence to his principles, to observe here, that Tandy, in coming forward on this occasion, well knew that he was putting to the most extreme hazard his popularity among the corporations of the city of Dublin, with whom he had enjoyed the most unbounded influence for near twenty years; and, in fact, in the event, his popularity was sacrificed. That did not prevent, however, his taking his part decidedly: he had the firmness to forego the gratification of his private feelings for the good of his country. The truth is, Tandy was a very sincere Republican, and it did not require much argument to show him the impossibility of attaining a republic by any means short of the united powers of the whole people; he therefore renounced the lesser objects for the greater, and gave up the certain influence which he possessed (and had well earned) in the city, for the contingency of that influence which he might have (and well deserves to have) in the nation. For my own part, I think it right to mention that, at this time, the establishment of a republic was not the immediate object of my speculations. My object was to secure the independence of my country under any form of government, to which I was led by a hatred of England, so deeply rooted in my nature, that it was rather an instinct than a principle. I left to others, better qualified for the inquiry, the investigation and merits of the different forms of government, and I contented myself with labouring on my own system, which was luckily in perfect coincidence as to its operation with that of those men who viewed the question on a broader and juster scale than I did at the time I mention."

Wolfe Tone was shortly after, on the recommendation of John Keogh, appointed secretary to the "General Committee" of the Catholics, and long laboured zealously in their service. But he was not content with mere Catholic agitation. He and his friends continued with unabated zeal in the organisation of the United Irish Society, which he hoped to see swallow up all others.

On the 30th of December, 1791, the United Irishmen of Dublin held a special session, at which they approved of a circular letter which was calculated to encourage similar societies, and to it they annexed a declaration of their political sentiments, and the test which they had taken as a social and sacred compact to bind them more closely together. They also in their publications animadverted severely upon the sixty-four addressers. The general disposition to republicanism which appeared in the publications and whole conduct of these new societies, became daily more and more obnoxious to Government; they were chiefly composed of Dissenters, yet several leading men amongst them were Protestants of the established church. It was believed, and constantly preached up by the Castle, that this new, violent, and affectionate attachment of the Dissenters for their Roman Catholic brethren, proceeded not from any sentiment of liberality or toleration, but purely to engage the co-operation of the great mass of the people the more warmly in forwarding the several popular questions lately brought before Parliament.

The truth is, that the patrician "Patriots" of Parliament were quite shy of association with the members of the new societies. Some of them were alarmed about French principles of democracy, which could scarcely be expected to be agreeable to a privileged class; others thought that the United Irishmen and the existing Catholic Committee both consisted of low people, and they were possessed by that general aversion felt by members of Parliament against all extra-parliamentary movements.

From that time shyness, jealousy, and distrust subsisted between those new societies and the Whig Club, though the agents and writers for Government attempted to identify their views, measures, and principles, as appears by the newspapers and other publications of that day. Tone, on his side, who had wholly given up Parliament as a thing not only useless, but noxious to the nation, felt the utmost resentment at the members of the opposition for any longer keeping up the de-



lusion of parliamentary patriotism, and avowed that he respected more the Castle members themselves. "They want," said he, "at least one vice—hypocrisy."

The Catholic General Committee had new life infused into it through the energy of Keogh and the labours of Wolfe Tone.

"There seems," says Tone in his sanguine way, "from this time out, a special Providence to have watched over the affairs of Ireland, and to have turned to her profit and advantage the deepest laid and most artful schemes of her enemies. Every measure adopted, and skilfully adopted, to thwart the expectations of the Catholics, and to crush the rising spirit of union between them and the Dissenters, has, without exception, only tended to confirm and fortify both, and the fact I am about to mention, for one, is a striking proof of the truth of this assertion. The principal charge in the general outcry raised in the House of Commons against the General Committee was that they were a self-appointed body, not nominated by the Catholics of the nation, and consequently not authorised to speak on their behalf. This argument, which in fact was the truth, was triumphantly dwelt upon by the enemies of the Catholics; but, in the end, it would have perhaps been more fortunate for their wishes if they had not laid such a stress upon this circumstance, and drawn the line of separation so strongly between the General Committee and the body at large. For the Catholics throughout Ireland, who had hitherto been indolent spectators of the business, seeing their brethren of Dublin, and especially the General Committee, insulted and abused for their exertions in pursuit of that liberty which, if attained, must be a common blessing to all, came forward as one man from every quarter of the nation with addresses and resolutions, adopting the measures of the General Committee as their own, declaring that body the only organ competent to speak for the Catholics of Ireland, and condemning, in terms of the most marked disapprobation and contempt, the conduct of the sixty-eight apostates, who were so triumphantly held up by the hirelings of Government as the respectable part of the Catholic community. The question was now fairly decided. The aristocracy shrunk back in disgrace and obscurity, leaving the field open to the democracy, and that body neither wanted talents nor spirit to profit by the advantages of their present situation.

"It is to the sagacity of *Myles Keon, of Keonbrook, County Leitrim*, that his country is indebted for the system on

which the General Committee was to be framed anew, in a manner that should render it impossible to bring it again in doubt whether that body were not the organ of the Catholic will. His plan was to associate to the Committee, as then constituted, two members from each county and great city, actual residents of the place which they represented, who were, however, only to be summoned upon extraordinary occasions, leaving the common routine of business to the original members, who, as I have already related, were all residents of Dublin. The Committee, as thus constituted, would consist of half town and half country members, and the elections for the latter he proposed should be held by means of primary and electoral assemblies, held, the first in each parish, the second in each county and great town. He likewise proposed that the town members should be held to correspond regularly with their country associates, these with their immediate electors, and these again with the primary assemblies. A more simple, and at the same time more comprehensive, organisation could not be devised. By this means the General Committee became the centre of a circle embracing the whole nation, and pushing its rays instantaneously to the remotest parts of the circumference. The plan was laid in writing before the General Committee by *Myles Keon*, and, after mature discussion, the first part, relating to the association and election of the country members, was adopted with some slight variation; the latter part, relating to the constant communication with the mass of the people, was thought, under the circumstances, to be too hardy, and was accordingly dropped *sub silentio*."

This was a project for a regular convention of delegates, which was then a measure perfectly legal, as indeed it still is in England.

On the proposal for this convention, there was immediate alarm and almost frantic rage on the part of the Ascendancy: for the Catholics were by this time over three millions; and the representatives of such a mass of people meeting in Dublin, and backed by the active sympathies of the fast-growing United Irish Society, were likely to be perilous to the Government at a moment of such high political excitement. Grand juries and town corporations passed violent resolutions against it, and pledged themselves to resist and suppress it. But the committee had taken counsel's opinion, and felt quite secure on the legal ground. Some of the further proceedings may most fitly be given in the words of Wolfe Tone's own narrative, with which



we must then part company, not without regret; for his "Autobiography" breaks off here:—\*

"This (1792) was a memorable year in Ireland. The publication of the plan for the new organizing of the General Committee gave an instant alarm to all the supporters of the British Government, and every effort was made to prevent the election of the country members; for it was sufficiently evident that, if the representatives of three millions of oppressed people were once suffered to meet, it would not afterwards be safe, or indeed possible, to refuse their just demands. Accordingly, at the ensuing assizes, the grand juries, universally, throughout Ireland, published the most furious, I may say frantic, resolutions, against the plan and its authors, whom they charged with little short of high treason. Government, likewise, was too successful in gaining over the Catholic clergy, particularly the bishops, who gave the measure at first very serious opposition. The committee, however, was not daunted; and, satisfied of the justness of their cause, and of their own courage, they laboured, and with success, to inspire the same spirit in the breasts of their brethren throughout the nation. For this purpose, their first step was an admirable one. By their order I drew up a state of the case, with the plan for the organization of the committee annexed, which was laid before Simon Butler and Beresford Burton, two lawyers of great eminence, and, what was of consequence here, king's counsel, to know whether the committee had in any respect contravened the law of the land, or whether, by carrying the proposed plan into execution, the parties concerned would subject themselves to pain or penalty. The answers of both the lawyers were completely in our favour, and we instantly printed them in the papers, and dispersed them in handbills, letters, and all possible shapes. This blow was decisive as to the legality of the measure. For the bishops, whose opposition gave us great trouble, four or five different missions were undertaken by different members of the sub-committee into the provinces, at their own expense, in order to hold conferences with them, in which, with much difficulty, they succeeded so far as to secure the co-operation of some, and the neutrality of the rest of the prelates. On these missions the most active members were John Keogh and Thomas Braughall, neither of whom spared purse nor person where the interests of the Catholic

body were concerned. I accompanied Mr. Braughall in his visit to Connaught, where he went to meet the gentry of that province at the great fair of Ballinasloe. As it was late in the evening when we left town, the postillion who drove us, having given warning, I am satisfied, to some footpads, the carriage was stopped by four or five fellows at the gate of Phoenix Park. We had two cases of pistols in the carriage, and we agreed not to be robbed. Braughall, who was at this time about sixty-five years of age, and lame from a fall off his horse some years before, was as cool and intrepid as man could be. He took the command, and by his orders I let down all the glasses, and called out to the fellows to come on, if they were so inclined, for that we were ready; Braughall desiring at the same time *not to fire till I could touch the scoundrels*. This rather embarrassed them, and they did not venture to approach the carriage, but held a council of war at the horse's head. I then presented one of my pistols at the postillion, swearing horribly that I would put him instantly to death if he did not drive over them, and I made him feel the muzzle of the pistol against the back of his head; the fellows on this took to their heels and ran off, and we proceeded on our journey without further interruption. When we arrived at the inn, Braughall, whose goodness of heart is equal to his courage, and no man is braver, began by abusing the postillion for his treachery, and ended by giving him half-a-crown. I wanted to break the rascal's bones, but he would not suffer me, and this was the end of our adventure.

"All parties were now fully employed preparing for the ensuing session of Parliament. The Government, through the organ of the corporations and grand juries, opened a heavy fire upon us of manifestoes and resolutions. At first we were like young soldiers, a little stunned with the noise, but after a few rounds we began to look about us, and seeing nobody drop with all this furious cannonade, we took courage, and determined to return the fire. In consequence, wherever there was a meeting of the Protestant Ascendancy, which was the title assumed by that party (and a very impudent one it was), we took care it should be followed by a meeting of the Catholics, who spoke as loud, and louder than their adversaries, and as we had the right clearly on our side, we found no great difficulty in silencing the enemy on this quarter. The Catholics likewise took care, at the same time that they branded their enemies, to

\* Some parts of his journals indeed will be found most valuable references farther on.



mark their gratitude to their friends, who were daily increasing, and especially to the people of Belfast, between whom and the Catholics the union was now completely established. Among the various attacks made on us this summer, the most remarkable for their virulence were those of the grand jury of Louth, headed by the Speaker of the House of Commons; of Limerick, at which the Lord Chancellor assisted; and of the corporation of the city of Dublin; which last published a most furious manifesto, threatening us, in so many words, with a resistance by force. In consequence, a meeting was held of the Catholics of Dublin at large, which was attended by several thousands, where the manifesto of the corporation was read and most ably commented upon by John Keogh, Dr. Ryan, Dr. M'Neven, and several others, and a counter manifesto being proposed, which was written by my friend Emmet, and incomparably well done, it was carried unanimously, and published in all the papers, together with the speeches above mentioned; and both speeches and the manifesto had such an infinite superiority over those of the corporation, which were also published and diligently circulated by the Government, that it put an end effectually to this warfare of resolutions.

"The people of Belfast were not idle on their part; they spared neither pains nor expense to propagate the new doctrine of the union of Irishmen, through the whole North of Ireland, and they had the satisfaction to see their proselytes rapidly extending in all directions. In order more effectually to spread their principles, twelve of the most active and intelligent among them subscribed £250 each, in order to set on foot a paper, whose object should be to give a fair statement of all that passed in France, whither every one turned their eyes; to inculcate the necessity of union amongst Irishmen of all religious persuasions; to support the emancipation of the Catholics; and finally, as the necessary, though not avowed consequence of all this, to erect Ireland into a republic, independent of England. This paper, which they called, very appositely, the *Northern Star*, was conducted by my friend Samuel Neilson, who was unanimously chosen editor, and it could not be delivered into abler hands. It is, in truth, a most incomparable paper, and it rose instantly, on its appearance, with a most rapid and extensive sale. The Catholics everywhere through Ireland (I mean the leading Catholics) were, of course, subscribers, and the *Northern Star* was one great means of effectually ac-

complishing the union of the two great sects, by the simple process of making their mutual sentiments better known to each other.

"It was determined by the people of Belfast to commemorate this year the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille with great ceremony. For this purpose they planned a review of the Volunteers of the town and neighbourhood, to be followed by a grand procession, with emblematical devices, etc. They also determined to avail themselves of this opportunity to bring forward the Catholic question in force, and, in consequence, they resolved to publish two addresses, one to the people of France, and one to the people of Ireland. They gave instructions to Dr. Brennan to prepare the former, and the latter fell to my lot. Brennan executed his task admirably, and I made my address, for my part, as good as I knew how. We were invited to assist at the ceremony, and a great number of the leading members of the Catholic Committee determined to avail themselves of this opportunity to show their zeal for the success of the cause of liberty in France, as well as their respect and gratitude to their friends in Belfast. In consequence, a grand assembly took place on the 14th of July. After the review, the Volunteers and inhabitants, to the number of about 6000, assembled in the Linen-Hall, and voted the address to the French people unanimously. The address to the people of Ireland followed, and, as it was directly and unequivocally in favour of the Catholic claims, we expected some opposition, but we were soon relieved from our anxiety, for the address passed, I may say, unanimously: a few ventured to oppose it indirectly, but their arguments were exposed and upset by the friends to Catholic Emancipation, amongst the foremost of whom we had the pleasure to see several Dissenting clergymen of great popularity in that county."

It will be seen that on the whole some progress was already made, and much more was soon to be expected in harmonizing the Catholics and Dissenters, at least in the towns. A harder task remained—to make peace between them in the country. In the County Armagh Peep-of-Day Boys were growing more ferocious, and, of course, the Defenders more strongly organized for resistance. As before, the country gentlemen of that county, as ignorant and savage a race of squires as any in Ireland, took part with the aggressors. At an assizes, in 1791, the grand jury passed a resolution



declaring that there had sprung up among the Papists "a passion for arming themselves, contrary to the law"—and that this was matter of serious alarm, etc. As the usual pretext of the visits of the Protestant Boys, "Wreckers," and other such banditti, was to search for arms, such a resolution of the grand jury was neither more nor less than an invitation to continue such visits, and an assurance of protection to the "Wreckers." These troubles had now extended considerably into Tyrone, Down, and Monaghan Counties; and it stirs indignation even at this day to think of so many wretched families always kept in wakeful terror; lying down in fear and rising up with a heavy heart, or perhaps flying to the desolate mountains by the light of their own burning cabins.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1791—1792.

Principles of United Irish Society.—Test.—Addresses.—Meeting of Parliament.—Catholic relief.—Trifling measure of that kind.—Petition of the Catholics.—Rejected.—Steady majority of two-thirds for the Castle.—Placeholding members.—Violent agitation upon the Catholic claims.—Questions put to Catholic Universities of the Continent.—Their answers.—Opposition to project of Convention.—Catholic question in the Whig Club.—Catholic Convention in Dublin.—National Guard.

THE first clubs of "United Irishmen" were perfectly legal and constitutional in their structure, in their action, and in their aims; and so continued until the new organization was adopted in 1795. They consisted, both in Belfast and Dublin, of Protestants chiefly, though many eminent Catholics joined them from the first. The first sentence of the constitution of the first club, at Belfast, is in these plain and moderate words.

"1st. This society is constituted for the purpose of forwarding a brotherhood of affection, a communion of rights, and a union of power among Irishmen of every religious persuasion, and thereby to obtain a complete reform in the legislature, founded on the principles of civil, political, and religious liberty."

Recollecting the hopeless character of the Irish Parliament of that day, one can scarcely pretend that it did not need "reform;" and as it most certainly would never reform itself, unless acted upon strongly by an external pressure, the idea seems to have been reasonable to endeavour to procure a union of power amongst Irishmen of every religious persuasion for that end. It was too clear also that a Parliament so constituted never would

emancipate the Catholics—that is, never would tolerate a "brotherhood of affection" or a "communion of rights." It was therefore extremely natural for patriotic Protestants, who felt that Ireland was their country, and no longer a colony but a nation, to take some means of assuring their fellow-countrymen, the Catholics, that they at least did not wish to perpetuate the degradation and exclusion of three millions of Irishmen; and thereupon to concert with them some common action for getting rid of this incurable oligarchy, which was the common enemy of them all. This was the whole meaning and purpose of the society for more than three years; and its means and agencies were as fair, open, and rational as its objects. Addresses, namely, to the people of Ireland, and sometimes to Reform clubs in England and in Scotland; articles in the newspapers, particularly in the *Northern Star*; and the promotion of an enlarged personal intercourse between the two sects who had lived in such deadly estrangement for two centuries. When they met one another face to face, worked together in clubs and meetings, visited one another's houses, fondled one another's children, there could not but grow up somewhat of that feeling of "Brotherhood" which is the first word of their constitution, the very cardinal principle of their society.

But this "Brotherhood," what was it but the French *fraternité*? And their "Civil, political, and religious liberty" was a phrase which to the ear of Government sounded of *égalité* and the *Champ de Mars*. The whole of the programme given above, which looks to-day so just and sensible, was then felt to be reeking all over with "French principles." The Government therefore kept an eye steadily on these societies, as will soon appear in the sequel.

The Dublin Club, which was formed in November of the same year, 1791, adopted the same declaration of principles or constitution, but added a "test," which was nothing but a solemn engagement to be taken by each new member, "that he would persevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection amongst Irishmen of every religious persuasion," etc., and "that he would never inform on or give evidence against any member of this or similar societies, for any act or expression of theirs done or made, collectively or individually, in or out of this society, in pursuance of the spirit of this obligation;" in other words, that if brotherhood amongst Irishmen, and the claim of civil and religious liberty should be made a



crime by law (as it was but too likely), he would not inform upon his comrades for their complicity in those crimes.

From this time active correspondence was carried on. A strong address, written by Dr. Drennan, was sent by the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin to the delegates for promoting a reform in Scotland, in which this sentence occurs, one of many similar suggestions which were undoubtedly intended to lead the way to something more and better than a reform in Parliament:—"If Government has a sincere regard for the safety of the constitution, let them coincide with the people in the speedy reform of its abuses, and not, by an obstinate adherence to them drive that people *into Republicanism*." There was another address from the same body to "the Volunteers of Ireland" (for the wreck of that organisation still existed in some places), adopted at a meeting of which Drennan was chairman, and Archibald Hamilton Rowan, secretary, and containing still stronger expressions. This document became, in 1794, the subject of a prosecution for seditious libel against Rowan the secretary, who was convicted by a carefully packed jury of his enemies, and sentenced to two years imprisonment, and a fine of five hundred pounds.

In the meantime, parliamentary proceedings were going forward much in their usual way. A session opened on the 19th of January, 1792, but it is impossible now to take much interest in following the futile efforts of the opposition. Mr. Grattan, who carefully avoided the United Irishmen, could still at least abuse the Government in terms of eloquent scurrility, and did not fail to do so, in moving an amendment to the address: "By this *trade* of Parliament the king was absolute; his will was signified by both Houses of Parliament, who were then as much an instrument in his hand as a bayonet in the hands of a regiment. Like a regiment, they had their adjutant, who sent to the infirmary for the old, and to the brothel for the young; and men thus carted as it were into that House to vote for the minister, were called the representatives of the people."

The country, as well as the ministers, had heard all this abuse before, and had begun almost to regard it as a discharge of blank cartridge. Yet the session is in some measure notable for a trifling Catholic Relief measure, introduced by Sir Hercules Langrishe, and rather unexpectedly supported by the Government. In fact it was evident to the English Govern-

ment that the Catholics were becoming a real element for good or for evil in this Irish nation; they had refused to be extirpated; refused to be brutalized by ignorance, for they would fly to the ends of the earth for education; they had so well profited also by the petty and grudging relaxations already granted them, that a large proportion of them were rich and influential; they were, in short, a power to be conciliated if that could be cheaply done, and so detached from "French principles" and made grateful to the Government. It is not, therefore, surprising to find Mr. Secretary Hobart (of course by orders from England) seconding the motion of Langrishe for leave to bring in this bill. Sir Hercules thus defines the objects of his bill for the Catholics:—

1st. He would give them the practice and profession of the law, as a reasonable provision, and application of their talents to their own country.

2dly. He would restore to them education, entire and unrestrained, because a state of ignorance was a state of barbarity. That would be accomplished by taking off the necessity for a licence, as enjoined by the act of 1782.

3dly. He would draw closer the bonds of intercourse and affection, by allowing intermarriage, repealing that cruel statute which served to betray female credulity, and bastardize the children of a virtuous mother.

4thly. He would remove those obstructions to arts and manufactures that limited the number of apprentices, which were so necessary to assist and promote trade. He then moved, "That leave be given to bring a bill for removing certain restraints and disabilities under which his majesty's Roman Catholic subjects labour from statutes at present in force."

This bill was prepared and concerted by its author in concert with Edmund Burke, and was perhaps as liberal in its provisions as any bill which could at that moment be presented with any chance of success: yet, meagre as it was, it called forth a storm of bigoted and brutal opposition. The General Committee of the Catholics—Edward Byrne, Esq., in the chair—held a meeting and passed some resolutions, which it is somewhat humiliating to read, but which were certainly politic in the circumstances. Here is the document:—

"*Dublin, February 4th, 1792.*

"GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ROMAN CATHOLICS. EDWARD BYRNE, Esq., in the Chair.

"*Resolved*, That this committee has been informed that reports have been



circulated that the application of the Catholics for relief extends to *unlimited and total emancipation*; and that attempts have been made, wickedly and falsely, to instil into the minds of the Protestants of this kingdom an opinion that our applications were preferred in a tone of menace.

"*Resolved*, That several Protestant gentlemen have expressed great satisfaction on being individually informed of the real extent and respectful manner of the applications for relief; have assured us that nothing could have excited jealousy, or apparent opposition to us, from our Protestant countrymen but the above-mentioned misapprehensions.

"*Resolved*, That we therefore deem it necessary to declare that the whole of our late applications, whether to his majesty's ministers, to men in power, or to private members of the legislature, as well as our intended petition, neither did, nor does contain anything, or extend further, either in substance or in principle, than the four following objects:

"1st, Admission to the profession and practice of the law.

"2d, Capacity to serve in country magistracies.

"3d, A right to be summoned, and to serve on grand and petty juries.

"4th, The right of voting in counties *only for Protestant members of Parliament*: in such a manner, however, as that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote, unless he either rented and cultivated a farm of twenty pounds per annum, *in addition* to his forty shilling freehold; or else possessed a freehold to the amount of twenty pounds a year."

This is to say, the Catholic Committee found itself obliged earnestly to disavow the sacrilegious thought of being allowed to vote on the same qualification as the Protestant forty-shilling freeholders; disclaimed with horror the idea of voting for Catholic members of Parliament; and publicly declared to Parliament and to all mankind that they did not presume to aspire to "total emancipation." But humble and scanty as their claim was, it was more than the Langrishe bill proposed to grant them. There was no provision in it for admitting them to the elective franchise upon any terms whatever. The committee prepared a petition, which was signed by some of the most respectable mercantile men of Dublin, and while the bill was in progress, the petition was presented by Mr. Egan. This gave rise to a conversation on the following Monday (20th February). On

that day Mr. David La Touche moved that the petition of the Roman Catholic committee, presented to the House on the preceding Saturday, should be read by the clerk: it was read, and he then moved that it should be rejected. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ogle. The greater part of the House was very violent for the rejection of the petition. Some few, who were against the prayer of the petition, objected to the harsh measure of rejection. Several of the opposition members supported Mr. La Touche's motion. Even Mr. G. Ponsonby, on this occasion, voted against his friend Mr. Grattan. The solicitor-general attempted to soften the refusal to the Catholics by moving that the prayer of the petition, as far as it related to a participation of the elective franchise, should not then be complied with. The attorney-general and some other staunch supporters of Government had spoken similar language; that they hoped quickly to see all religious distinctions and restrictions done away with, but that the fulness of time was not yet come. Mr. Forbes, the Hon. F. Hutchinson, Colonel (now Lord) Hutchinson, Mr. Smith, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Grattan spoke strongly against the motion, and in favour of admitting the Catholics to a share in the elective franchise. Much virulent abuse was heaped upon that part of the body of Roman Catholics which was supposed to be represented by the Catholic Committee. At a very late hour the House divided, 208 for rejecting the petition, and 23 only against it. Then Mr. La Touche moved that the petition from the society of the United Irishmen of Belfast should be also rejected; and the question being put was carried with two or three negatives.

The bill itself passed quietly through the committee; and on the third reading, Sir Hercules Langrishe congratulated the country on the growth of the spirit of liberality. The growth was slow, and the liberality was rather narrow: nor would this measure deserve mention—as it was soon superseded by a much larger one—but to show the very humble and unpretending position taken by the only body then representing the Catholics. It must be remembered, too, that war in Europe was by this time imminent and certain; and though England had not yet formally joined the coalition against France, that event was becoming daily more inevitable; and the Government was very desirous, as usual in such moments of danger, to send a message of peace to Ireland, and to show the three millions of Catholics that their real friends were, not those



"fraternal" United Irishmen, but Mr. Pitt and the Earl of Westmoreland.

Upon all other questions the state of parties in Parliament continued nearly the same that it had been for many years; that is, the Castle was always certain of more than a two-thirds majority. Mr. G. Ponsonby, after an elaborate argument, moved for leave to bring in a bill repealing every law which prohibited a trade from Ireland with the countries lying eastward of the Cape of Good Hope; which was lost by 156 votes against 70. On the same day, Mr. Forbes, faithful to his special mission, brought forward his regular Place and Pension bills: they were both put off to a distant day, without a division, though not without some debate. Indeed these attacks on the places and pensions were now more intolerable to the Government and its supporters than ever before; and they were louder than ever in their reprobation of such Jacobin movements, as a manifest attempt to diminish the royal prerogative and bring in French principles.

A singular motion was made this session, which merits notice as an illustration of the shameless and desperate corruption of the times. Mr. Brown moved to bring in a bill to repeal an act of the last session touching the "weighing of butter, hides, and tallow" in the city of Cork, and the appointment of a weighmaster in that city. This office had long been in the gift of the corporation of the city, and the corporation had always found one weighmaster more than enough; but the Government, in pursuance, said Mr. Browne, of their settled policy of "creating influence," had taken the appointment, split it into three parts, and bestowed it on *three members of Parliament*. Mr. Grattan seconded the motion. It was opposed by the chancellor of the exchequer on the express ground that it was an "insult to the crown," and therefore a manifest piece of French democracy and infidelity, intended to overthrow the throne and the altar. There was a sharp debate, in which Patriots said many cutting things; and at half-past two in the morning the motion was negatived without a division. Is it wonderful that the minds of honest people were now altogether turned away from such a Parliament? It was prorogued on the 18th of April. The Speaker, in his address to the viceroy, speaks of one gratifying fact, "the extension of trade, agriculture, and manufactures, which has with a rapid and uninterrupted progress raised this kingdom to a state of prosperity and wealth

never before experienced in it." But at the same time he let his excellency know that this prosperity "would soon cease" if they did not carefully cherish the blessed constitution in church and state. "Its preservation, therefore," he continued, "must ever be the great object of their care, and there is no principle on which it is founded so essential to its preservation, nor more justly dear to their patriotic and loyal feelings, than that which has settled the throne of these realms on his majesty's illustrious house; on it, and on the provisions for securing a Protestant Parliament, depends the Protestant Ascendancy, and with it the continuance of the many blessings we now enjoy."

It appears from the studied allusions to the Protestant Ascendancy, which in the speech of the Speaker were evidently aimed against the petition of the Catholics for a participation in the elective franchise, that Mr. Foster wished to raise a strong and general opposition to that measure throughout the country: but the speech of the lord-lieutenant imported that the Government, moved by the impulse of the British councils, was disposed rather to extend than contract the indulgences to the Roman Catholics. His majesty approved of their wisdom in the liberal indulgences that had been granted, but suggested no apprehension of danger to the Protestant interest, which had been almost a matter of course in all viceregal speeches, to the great comfort of the "Ascendancy."

This year was a season of most vehement agitation and discussion upon the Catholic claims. That body was, of course, greatly dissatisfied with the miserable measure of relief granted by the shabby bill of Sir Hercules Langrishe. Mr. Simon Butler, chairman of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, published, by order of that society, a "Digest of the Popery Laws," bringing into one view the whole body of penalties and disabilities to which Catholics still remained subject after all the small and nibbling attempts or pretences of relief. The pamphlet thus truly sums up the actual condition of the Catholics at that moment, after Sir Hercules Langrishe's Act:—

"Such is the situation of three millions of good and faithful subjects in their native land! Excluded from every trust, power, or emolument of the state, civil or military; excluded from all the benefits of the constitution in all its parts; excluded from all corporate rights and immunities; expelled from grand juries, restrained in petit juries; excluded from every direc-



tion, from every trust, from every incorporated society, from every establishment, occasional or fixed, instituted for public defence, public police, public morals, or public convenience; from the bench, from the bank, from the exchange, from the university, from the college of physicians: from what are they not excluded? There is no institution which the wit of man has invented or the progress of society produced, which private charity or public munificence has founded for the advancement of education, learning, and good arts, for the permanent relief of age, infirmity, or misfortune, from the superintendence of which, and in all cases where common charity would permit, from the enjoyment of which the legislature has not taken care to exclude the Catholics of Ireland. Such is the state which the corporation of Dublin have thought proper to assert, 'differs in no respect from that of the Protestants, save only in the exercise of political power;' and the host of grand juries consider 'as essential to the existence of the constitution, to the permanency of the connection with England, and the continuation of the throne in his majesty's royal house.' A greater libel on the constitution, the connection, or the succession, could not be pronounced, nor one more pregnant with dangerous and destructive consequences than this, which asserts that they are only to be maintained and continued by the slavery and oppression of three millions of good and loyal subjects."

At the same time the General Committee prepared a "Declaration" of Catholic tenets on certain points with regard to which people of that creed had long been wantonly belied: such as keeping of faith with heretics; the alleged pretension of the Pope to absolve subjects from their allegiance; of clergymen to dispense them from oaths, and the like. All these alleged doctrines the Declaration indignantly and contemptuously denied; and it was signed universally throughout Ireland by clergy and laity. To the Declaration was added a republication of the well-known "Answers of six Catholic Universities abroad to the queries which had been propounded to them, at the request of Mr. Pitt, three years before, on behalf of the English Catholics." The universities were those of Paris, Louvain, Alcalá, Douay, Salamanca, and Valladolid. The queries and the answers form a highly important document for the history of the time. We give the queries in full, and an extract or two from the answers—only premising that Mr. Pitt

sought these declarations, not to satisfy his own mind, because he was too well informed to need this, but only to stop the mouths of benighted country gentlemen and greedy Ascendency politicians, who would be sure to bawl out against the concessions to Catholics which he in that perilous time and for political reasons was determined to grant.

#### THE QUERIES.

1. Has the Pope, or cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the Church of Rome, any civil authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence whatsoever, within the realm of England?

2. Can the Pope, or cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the Church of Rome, absolve or dispense his majesty's subjects from their oath of allegiance, upon any pretext whatsoever?

3. Is there any principle in the tenets of the Catholic faith by which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with heretics, or other persons differing from them in religious opinions, in any transaction, either of a public or a private nature?

And the six universities responded unanimously and simultaneously in the negative upon all the three points. The answers are all exceedingly distinct and categorical. That of the university of Alcalá, in Spain, may serve as a specimen:—

"To the first question it is answered—That none of the persons mentioned in the proposed question, either individually or collectively in council assembled, have any right in civil matters; but that all civil power, jurisdiction, and pre-eminence are derived from inheritance, election, the consent of the people, and other such titles of that nature.

"To the second it is answered, in like manner—That none of the persons above-mentioned have a power to absolve the subjects of his Britannic majesty from their oaths of allegiance.

"To the third question it is answered—That the doctrine which would exempt Catholics from the obligation of keeping faith with heretics, or with any other persons who dissent from them in matters of religion, instead of being an article of Catholic faith, is entirely repugnant to its tenets.

"Signed in the usual form, March 17th, 1789."

The learned doctors of some of these universities could not refrain, while they gave their answers, from administering a rebuke to those who asked such questions. For instance, the Faculty of Divinity at



Louvain, "Having requested to give an opinion upon the questions above stated, does it with readiness—but is struck with astonishment that such questions should, at the end of this 18th century, be proposed to any learned body, by inhabitants of a kingdom [England] that glories in the talents and discernment of its natives."

The publication of the Catholic Declaration, with the opinions of the universities, was very far indeed from satisfying the theologians of the Protestant interest; especially as there came forth at the same time the detailed plan for electing delegates this year to the Convention of Catholics which had already been decided upon. These Papists were evidently preparing to rise a little out of their abject humility. The Protestant theologians thought themselves too acute to be imposed upon by all those fine protestations of Papists, and professions made by Popish universities. Since when, they desired to know, was it held that the declaration of persons charged with systematic perfidy—that they were persons who keep faith—was held to be the evidence of their good character? They also cited examples of the Pope having actually, in former ages, absolved, or attempted to absolve, subjects from their allegiance. Besides, was it not well known that those universities in France and Spain were full of Popish doctors, who would desire nothing better than to delude the minds of unsuspecting Irish Protestants, and so pave the way for the overthrow of the Protestant Church, resumption of forfeited estates, and fulfilment of Pastorini's prophecies! It seems to have been more especially the "plan" for election of delegates to the Catholic Convention that excited the alarm and wrath of the "Ascendancy."

Immediately on the appearance of this plan, a general outcry was raised against it; sedition, tumult, conspiracy, and treason, were echoed from county to county, from grand jury to grand jury. Some legislators, high in the confidence of their sovereign, and armed with the influence of station and office, presided at those meetings, and were foremost in arraigning measures, upon the merits of which in another place and in another function they were finally to determine.

The exaggerated and alarming language of most of the grand juries imported that the Catholics of Ireland were on the eve of a general insurrection, ready to hurl the king from his throne, and tear the whole frame of the constitution to pieces.

The Leitrim grand jury denominated the plan "an inflammatory and danger-

ous publication," and stated "that they felt it necessary to come forward at that period to declare that they were ready to support, with their lives and fortunes, their present most valuable constitution in church and state, and that they would resist to the utmost of their power the attempts of any body of men, however numerous, who should presume to threaten innovation in either."

The grand jury of the county of Cork denominated the plan "an unconstitutional proceeding of the most alarming, dangerous, and seditious tendency—an attempt to overawe Parliament;" they stated their determination to "protect and defend, with their lives and property, the present constitution in church and state." That of Roscommon, after the usual epithets of "alarming, dangerous, and seditious," asserted that the plan called upon the whole body of the Roman Catholics of Ireland to associate themselves in the metropolis of that kingdom upon the model of the national assembly of France, which had already plunged that devoted country into a state of anarchy and tumult unexampled in any civilised nation; they stated it to be "an attempt to overawe Parliament;" they mentioned their serious and sensible alarms for the existence of their present happy establishment in church and state; and their determination, "at the hazard of every thing dear to them, to uphold and maintain the Protestant interest of Ireland."

The grand jury of Sligo *Resolved* "that they would, at all times, and by every constitutional means in their power, resist and oppose every attempt then making, or thereafter to be made, by the Roman Catholics, to obtain their elective franchise, or any participation in the government of the country." And that of Donegal declared that, though "they regarded the Catholics with tenderness, they would maintain, at the hazard of every thing dear to them, the Protestant interest of Ireland."

The grand jury of Fermanagh, professing also "the warmest attachment to their Roman Catholic brethren," felt it, however, necessary to come forward at that period to declare that they were "ready with their lives and fortunes to support their present invaluable constitution in church and state." And that of the County of Derry, after expressing their apprehensions lest that proceeding "might lead to the formation of a hierarchy (consisting partly of laity) which would destroy the Protestant Ascendancy, the freedom of the elective franchise, and the established constitution of this coun-



try," tendered their lives and fortunes to support the happy constitution as established at the revolution of 1688. A very great majority of the leading signatures affixed to those resolutions, were those of men either high in the government of the country, or enjoying lucrative places under it, or possessing extensive borough interest.

The grand jury of the county of Louth, with the Speaker of the House of Commons at their head, declared, "that the allowing to Roman Catholics the right of voting for members to serve in Parliament, or admitting them to any participation in the government of the kingdom, was incompatible with the safety of the Protestant establishment, the continuance of the succession to the crown in the illustrious House of Hanover, and finally tended to shake, if not destroy, their connection with Great Britain, on the continuance and inseparability of which depended the happiness and prosperity of that kingdom; that they would oppose every attempt towards such a dangerous innovation, and that they would support with their lives and fortunes the present constitution, and the settlement of the throne on his majesty's Protestant house." The freeholders of the county of Limerick charged the Catholic Committee with an intention to overawe the legislature, to force a repeal of the penal laws, and to create a Popish democracy for their government and direction in pursuit of whatever objects might be holden out to them by turbulent and seditious men. They then instructed their representatives in Parliament, "at all events, to oppose any proposition which might be made for extending to Catholics the right of elective franchise." At this meeting the chancellor was present. The corporation of Dublin in strong terms denied the competency of Parliament to extend the right of franchise to the Catholics, which they called "alienating their most valuable inheritance;" and roundly asserted against the fact, that "the last session of Parliament left the Roman Catholics in no wise different from their Protestant fellow-subjects, save only in the exercise of political power."

Some of the grand juries indignantly rejected the proposals made to them of coming to any resolutions injurious to their Catholic brethren. Agents had been employed to tamper with every grand jury that met during the summer assizes. Nothing could tend more directly than this measure of pre-engaging the sentiments of the country against

three millions of its inhabitants, to raise and foment discord and disunion between Protestants and Catholics. Counter resolutions, answers and replies, addresses and protestations, were published and circulated in the public papers from some grand jurymen, and from many different bodies of Catholics; several bold and severe publications appeared during the course of the summer, not only from individuals of the Catholic body, but from the friends of their cause amongst the Protestants. It is scarcely questionable but that the virulent and acrimonious opposition raised against the Catholic petition for a very limited participation in the elective franchise, enlivened the sense of their grievances, opened their views, and united their energies into a common effort to procure a general repeal of the whole Penal Code.

The General Committee of the Catholics and the United Irish Society were unavoidably coming closer together. In a debate of the Committee, Mr. Keogh, a gentleman of great manliness of character as well as power of intellect, fairly said that, for a late publication (*Digest of the Popery Laws*), the United Irishmen and their respected chairman, Mr. Simon Butler, demanded their warmest gratitude.\*

At that time the United Irish Society was the only association of any kind which even admitted a Catholic into its ranks. No Catholic could be in the Whig Club, nor would it even permit the Catholic question to be agitated there. This point was decided in a singular debate of the Whig Club in November, 1792, when Mr. Huband having proposed that the sense of the meeting should be taken upon the course to be pursued by members with respect to Catholic claims—

\* Mr. Plowden, in an apologetic sort of way, says upon this occasion—"It was natural for persons staggering under oppression cordially to grasp every hand that held out relief." Nothing can be more provoking than the affectation of "loyalty" to the House of Hanover which certain Catholic writers, previous to emancipation, thought it needful to make. Plowden, in another place, speaking of the same publication made by the United Irishmen, says—"It would be unfair if the historian were to represent the transactions of a particular period from consequences that appeared at a distant interval of time, and the subsequent fate of many of the actors in the scenes. It is his duty faithfully to represent them as they really passed at the time. Merit and demerit can only attach from previous or co-existing circumstances, not from the posthumous issue engendered in the womb of time by future base and unavowed connections. It was not because an individual was guilty of treason in the year 1798, that every previous act or transaction in which that individual was concerned for the twenty, ten, or five preceding years was affected with the venom of his latter crime."



Some gentlemen decidedly asserted that they did not think the Catholic question ought to be mentioned or discussed in the Whig Club. They were averse to their having any concern in it, and one went so far as to say, that if it were admitted to be debated in that society, he would with his own hand strike his name out of the list of the members.

On which Mr. A. Hamilton Rowan observed, that he would be as tenacious as any other gentleman of remaining in any society where improper subjects were proposed for discussion; but that for his part, he would not hesitate to strip off his Whig Club uniform, and to throw it to the waiter, if the Catholic question were deemed an unfit subject for their discussion.

Mr. W. Brown called the attention of gentlemen to the purpose of their association. They placed themselves in the front of the public cause, to further it, not to stop its further progress; the second principle of their declaration was, a solemn engagement to support the rights of the people, etc. Who, said he, are the people? I dare any gentleman to name the people of Ireland without including the Roman Catholics. What! is it a question, shall three millions of Irishmen continue slaves or obtain their freedom! Is a question to be deserted by men professing patriotism, professing to redress the public oppression, pledged to stand together in defence of their country's liberties? No; it is not.

To desert the cause of the Catholics, would be to desert the principles of their institution, it would be to deserve their calumny thrown against them by their enemies, that they were an opposition struggling for power, not a band of patriots for the public weal; it would rob their names of honour, their rank and wealth of consequence, and it would finally sink them from a station of political importance, down to the obscurity and insignificance of an interested and impotent party.

On the question being put, whether the Catholic question should be taken into consideration or not on Wednesday fortnight, it was negatived on a division by thirteen.

The long talked-off Convention of the Catholics was actually held in December of this year: the elections of delegates had been regularly and quietly held, in pursuance of the "plan," and the first meeting of the delegates assembled at Tailors' Hall, Dublin, on the 2nd of December, 1792; two hundred delegates being present.

While this peaceable convention was holding its meetings, another phenomenon appeared in Dublin, which gave still great uneasiness, both to the "Ascendancy" and to the Castle. The National Guard, a new military body, was arrayed and disciplined in Dublin. They wore green uniforms, with buttons engraved with a harp, under a cap of liberty, instead of a crown. Their leaders were A. H. Rowan, and James Napper Tandy; they affected to address each other by the appellation of citizen, in imitation of the French. This corps was in high favour with the populace, and was always cordially greeted as they appeared in the street or on parade. Government really felt alarm; a general insurrection was apprehended; they pretended to have information of the particular nights fixed for that purpose. The magistrates, by order of Government, patrolled the streets with bodies of horse each night. It was given out from the Castle that the custom-house, the post-office, and the jail were the first places to be attacked, and that the signal for rising was to have been the pulling down of the statue of King William in College Green with ropes. Many other false rumours of conspiracies and assassinations were set afloat. In the meanwhile the National Guards, and all the Volunteer corps of Dublin, were summoned to assemble on Sunday, the 9th of December, 1792, to celebrate the victory of the French and the triumph of universal liberty. The summons began with an affectation of Gallicism—"Citizen Soldier." However, the meeting was prevented, and Government issued a proclamation on the 8th of December against their assembling. The National Guards did not assemble, and the only persons who appeared on parade were A. H. Rowan, J. N. Tandy, and Carey the printer.

This Catholic Convention and this National Guard appeared dangerous in the eyes of Fitzgibbon (now Earl of Clare); the object of his life was the legislative union, and he foresaw, that unless conventions of delegates and associations of armed citizens were prohibited and prevented by law, that great measure never could be carried. Accordingly his busy brain was already busy in maturing a series of measures to deprive all Irishmen, whether Protestant or Catholic, of every means of expressing their wishes by delegates, and every means of asserting their rights by arms.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

1792—1793.

The Catholic Convention.—Reconciliation of differences amongst the Catholics.—Their deputation to the king.—Successes of the French fortunate for the Catholics.—Dumouriez and Jemappes.—Gracious reception of the Catholic deputation.—Belfast mob draw the carriage of Catholic delegates.—Secret Committee of the Lords.—Report on Defenders and United Irishmen.—Attempt of committee to connect the two.—Lord Clare creates "alarm among the better classes."—Proclamation against unlawful assemblies.—Lord Edward Fitzgerald.—French Republic declares war against England.—Large measure of Catholic relief immediately proposed.—Moved by Secretary Hobart.—Act carried.—Its provisions.—What it yields, and what it withholds.—Arms and gunpowder act.—Act against conventions.—Lord Clare the real author of British policy in Ireland as now established.—Effect and intention of the "Convention Act."—No such law in England.—Militia bill.—Catholic Committee.—No reform.—Close of session.

THE Catholic Convention met under rather favourable auspices. In the course of the summer a reconciliation or coalition had been generally effected between the committee and several of the sixty-four addressers, including bishops. Convinced that his majesty's ministers in England were disposed to favour their pretensions, it was found political in the body to act in concert, and to this accommodating disposition and desire of internal union is to be attributed the moderation of the public acts of that Convention. They framed a petition to the king, which was a firm though modest representation of their grievances; it was signed by Dr. Troy and Dr. Moylan on behalf of themselves and the other Roman Catholic prelates and clergy of Ireland, and by the several delegates for the different districts which they respectively represented. They then proceeded to choose five delegates to present it to his majesty; the choice fell upon Sir Thomas French, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Keogh, Mr. Devereux, and Mr. Bellew. These gentlemen went by short seas; in their road to Donaghadee, they passed through Belfast in the morning, and some of the most respectable inhabitants waited upon them at the Donegal Arms, where they remained about two hours; upon their departure, the populace took their horses from their carriages, and dragged them through the town amidst the liveliest shouts of joy and wishes for their success.\* The

\* Of this extraordinary demonstration, never exemplified before, and never imitated since, Wolfe Tone says:—"Whatever effect it might have on the negotiations in England, it certainly tended to raise and confirm the hopes of the Catholics at home.

delegates returned these expressions of affection and sympathy, by the most grateful acknowledgments and assurances of their determination to maintain that union which formed the strength of Ireland. On the 2d of January, 1793, the gentlemen delegated by the Catholics of Ireland attended the levee at St. James's, were introduced to his majesty by Mr. Dundas, secretary of state for the home department, and had the honour of presenting their humble petition to his majesty, who was pleased most graciously to receive it.

His majesty had his reasons. Fortunately for the Catholics, England was at this moment in a condition of extreme difficulty and peril. She was already engaged in the coalition of European powers to crush the new-born Hercules of France. The French, under Dumouriez, had happily driven back the Prussian invaders from the passes of the Argonne. Dumouriez had followed up his successes, entered Belgium and gained over the Austrians the glorious victory of Jemappes. The King of France had already been removed from his throne to the Temple prison; and on the very day when the King of England was so graciously receiving the Catholic delegates, that unhappy French monarch was awaiting his trial, sentence, and execution at the hands of his people; all of which took place a few days afterwards. This event was to be the signal for England to enter actively into the war. Ever since August of last year the British Court had refused all communication with M. Chauvelin, the French envoy, and he was finally dismissed from England immediately on the arrival of news of King Louis' execution. War, therefore, was now inevitable, and war on such a scale and against such a foe as would tax the utmost energies and resources of Great Britain. It was determined accordingly to endeavour to purchase the three millions of Irish Catholics, who make such excellent recruiting material; so that, instead of having Irish brigades against them, they might have Irish regiments for them. It was also a part of this policy to detach the Catholics from the

'Let our delegates,' said they, 'if they are refused, return by the same route.' To those who look beyond the surface it was an interesting spectacle, and pregnant with material consequences, to see the Dissenter of the North drawing, with his own hands, the Catholic of the South in triumph through what may be denominated the capital of Presbyterianism. However repugnant it might be to the wishes of the British minister, it was a wholesome suggestion to his prudence, and when he scanned the whole business in his mind, was probably not dismissed from his contemplation."



United Irishmen, to disgust them with "French principles," and predispose them to look favourably on the Legislative Union. The delegates returned from London, in the complacent language of Mr. Plowden, "the welcome heralds of the benign countenance and reception they had received from the father of his people."

On the 10th of January, 1792, the Irish Parliament met. The speech from the throne recommended attention to the claims of the Catholics. The House of Lords very early in the session appointed a secret committee to inquire into the state of the nation, with special reference to the troubles in the North between Peep-of-Day Boys and Defenders. The Secret Committee made a most extraordinary report, in which they appear to find no criminal rioters in the North except the poor Defenders. "All, so far as the committee could discover, of the Roman Catholic persuasion, poor ignorant labouring men, sworn to secrecy, and impressed with an opinion that they were assisting the Catholic cause." The committee further endeavoured to connect in some way with those agrarian disturbers, the political demonstrations of the United Irishmen at Belfast and other towns. They report with high indignation:—

"That an unusual ferment had for some months past disturbed several parts of the North, particularly the town of Belfast and the county of Antrim; it was kept up and encouraged by seditious papers and pamphlets of the most dangerous tendency, printed at very cheap and inconsiderable rates in Dublin and Belfast, which issued almost daily from certain societies of men or clubs in both those places, calling themselves committees under various descriptions, and carrying on a constant correspondence with each other. These publications were circulated amongst the people with the utmost industry, and appeared to be calculated to defame the Government and Parliament, and to render the people dissatisfied with their condition and with their laws. *The conduct of the French was shamefully extolled*, and recommended to the public view as an example for imitation; hopes and expectations had been held up of their assistance by a descent upon that kingdom, and prayers had been offered up at Belfast from the pulpit for the success of their arms, in the presence of military associations, which had been newly levied and arrayed in that town. A body of men associated themselves in Dublin, under the title of the First National Battalion: their uniform was

copied from the French, green turned up with white, white waistcoats and striped trousers, gilt buttons, impressed with a harp and letters importing 'First National Battalion,' no crown, but a device over the harp of a cap of liberty upon a pike; two pattern coats had been left at two shops in Dublin. Several bodies of men had been collected in different parts of the North, armed and disciplined under officers chosen by themselves, and composed mostly of the lowest classes of the people. These bodies were daily increasing in numbers and force, they had exerted their best endeavours to procure military men of experience to act as their officers, some of them having expressly stated that there were men enough to be had, but that officers were what they wanted. Stands of arms and gunpowder to a very large amount, much above the common consumption, had been sent within the last few months to Belfast and Newry, and orders given for a much greater quantity, which it appeared could be wanted only for military operations. At Belfast, bodies of men in arms were drilled and exercised for several hours almost every night by candle-light, and attempts had been made to seduce the soldiery, which, much to the honour of the king's forces, had proved ineffectual. The declared object of these military bodies was to procure a reform of Parliament; but the obvious intention of most of them appeared to be to overawe the Parliament and the Government, and to dictate to both. The committee forbore mentioning the names of several persons, lest it should in any manner affect any criminal prosecution, or involve the personal safety of any man who had come forward to give them information. The result of their inquiries was, that in their opinion it was incompatible with the public safety and tranquillity of that kingdom to permit bodies of men in arms to assemble when they pleased without any legal authority; and that the existence of a self-created representative body of any description of the king's subjects, taking upon itself the government of them, and levying taxes or subscriptions, etc." ought not to be permitted.

It is very easy to see the object of this report: it was simply Lord Clare's method of preparing the way for his coercion acts, which were to apply not only to the Defenders, but also to the United Irishmen and to the Catholic Convention itself.

The policy adopted towards the Catholics at that time took the form which it has worn ever since, and which may be described in four words—to conciliate the



rich and to coerce the poor. This extravagant report of the Lords' committee, giving so overcharged a picture of the insurrectionary spirit of the North, was in order to create "alarm among the better classes," the uniform preparative for coercion and oppression in Ireland.

On the 31st of January the House of Commons took into consideration a proclamation of the lord-lieutenant and privy council, dated the 8th December last, for dispersing all *unlawful assemblies*; and Lord Headfort moved a vote of thanks to the viceroy for this proclamation "to preserve domestic tranquillity from those whose declared objects were *tumult, disaffection, and sedition*." This occasioned some debate; but the address passed without a division. This proceeding of the House proves that the great Government majority in the House, as well as the Lords, were in full concurrence with the Government in favour of coercion. It is further interesting from an incident which befell at the close of the debate—Lord Edward Fitzgerald, in a very vehement tone, declared, "I give my most hearty disapprobation to that address, for I do think that the lord-lieutenant and the majority of this House are the worst subjects the king has." A loud cry of "to the bar," and "take down his words," immediately echoed from every part of the House. The House was cleared in an instant, and strangers were not readmitted for nearly three hours.

He was admitted to explain himself, and on his explaining, the House

"*Resolved, nem. con.*, That the excuse offered by the Right Hon. Edward Fitzgerald, commonly called Lord Edward Fitzgerald, for the said words so spoken, is unsatisfactory and insufficient;" and he was ordered to attend at the bar on the next day, when his apology was received, though not without a division upon its sufficiency; for receiving it, 135; against it, 66.—(12 *Par. Deb.*, p. 82.)

Mr. Grattan also expressed himself with some indignation in this debate, on the classing up the remnant of his old Volunteers along with such seditious company as United Irishmen and National Guards; for Mr. Secretary Hobart had read to the House, as part of the outrageous proceedings which had dictated the strong measure of the proclamation, a certain summons of the corps of goldsmiths, calling on the delegates of that corps to assemble and celebrate the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick (from Valmy), and the French victory in the Low Countries (Jemappes). Mr. Grattan was soon to learn that, in the application of the new laws which were

now to be enacted, the remnant of the classic old Volunteers was to be held no more sacred than the most republican United Irish club, or the poorest lodge of Defenders.

On the 1st of February, the French Republic declared war against England (which was now known to be the very head and heart of the coalition against France); and on the 14th of that month the Irish secretary, Mr. Hobart, presented a petition from some Catholics, and described at length the measure which he intended to introduce. A few days after, he brought in his "Relief Bill," and had it read a first time. It was opposed by Mr. Ogle, and by the famous Dr. Duigenan. Throughout its passage it was supported by the Court party, because it was a Court measure; and Mr. Grattan, Mr. Curran, and most of the opposition supported it, of course. Dr. Duigenan raked up several times all the most hideous accusations that ever bigotry had invented, and ignorance believed against Papists, in order to oppose the grant of any relief to such miscreants. On the second reading, Mr. G. Ponsonby and Mr. La Touche spoke against it. When the bill was in committee, Mr. George Knox, in a liberal and able speech, moved that the committee might be empowered to receive a clause to admit Roman Catholics to sit and vote in the House of Commons. Major Doyle seconded the motion, which was strongly supported by Mr. Daly, Col. Hutchinson, Mr. M. Smith, Mr. John O'Neil, Mr. Hardy, and some other gentlemen friendly to Catholic emancipation; it was, however, rejected upon a division by 163 against 69.

The bill finally passed both Houses, and received the royal assent on the 9th of April. This act, which was received with so much gratitude, and was extolled as such a triumph of liberality, enables Catholics to vote for members of Parliament—that is, for Protestant members and none other; admits them to the bar—that is, the outer bar—all the honours and high places of the profession being reserved for Protestants; enables them to vote for municipal officers—that is, Protestant officers exclusively; permits them to possess arms, provided they possess a certain freehold and personal estate, and take certain oaths, neither of which conditions applied to Protestants; allows them to serve on juries, but not to sit on parish vestries; admits them, under certain restrictions, to hold military and naval commissions, certain of the higher grades being excepted—and it subjects the exercise of most of these new privi-



leges to the taking of a most insulting and humiliating oath. As this act (33 Geo. III., c. 21.) settled for thirty-six years the whole condition and relations of the Catholics, it is here given in full :—

“ 33 Geo. III., c. xxi.

“ *An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic Subjects of Ireland.*

“ *Whereas*, various acts of Parliament have been passed imposing on his majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion many restraints and disabilities to which other subjects of this realm are not liable; and from the peaceable and loyal demeanour of his majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic subjects, it is fit that such restraints and disabilities shall be discontinued: *Be it therefore enacted*, by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That his majesty's subjects being Papists or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, or married to Papists or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, or educating any of their children in that religion, shall not be liable or subject to any penalties, forfeitures, disabilities, or incapacities, or to any laws for the limitation, charging, or discovering of their estates and property, real and personal, or touching the acquiring of property or securities affecting property; save such as his majesty's subjects of the Protestant religion are liable and subject to; and that such parts of all oaths as are required so be taken by persons in order to qualify themselves for voting at election of members to serve in Parliament; and also such parts of all oaths required to be taken by persons voting at elections for members to serve in Parliament as import to deny that the person taking the same is a Papist, or married to a Papist, or educates his children in the Popish religion, shall not hereafter be required to be taken by any voter, but shall be omitted by the person administering the same; and that it shall not be necessary, in order to entitle a Papist, or person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, to vote at an election of members to serve in Parliament, that he should at, or previous to his voting, take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, any statute now in force to the contrary of any of the said matters in any wise notwithstanding.

“ II. *Provided always, and be it further*

*enacted*, That all Papists, or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, who may claim to have a right of voting for members to serve in Parliament, or of voting for magistrates in any city, town corporate, or borough, within this kingdom, be hereby required to perform all qualifications, registries, and other requisites, which are now required of his majesty's Protestant subjects, in like cases, by any law or laws now of force in this kingdom, save and except such oaths and parts of oaths as are herein before excepted.

“ III. *And provided always*, That nothing herein before contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to repeal or alter any law or act of Parliament now in force, by which certain qualifications are required to be performed by persons enjoying any offices or places of trust under his majesty, his heirs and successors other than as hereinafter is enacted.

“ IV. *Provided also*, That nothing nerein contained, shall extend, or be construed to extend, to give Papists, or persons professing the Popish religion, a right to vote at any parish vestry for levying of money to rebuild or repair any parish church, or respecting the demising or disposal of the income of any estate belonging to any church or parish, or for the salary of the parish clerk, or at the election of any churchwarden.

“ V. *Provided always*, That nothing contained in this act shall extend to, or be construed to affect, any action or suit now depending, which shall have been brought or instituted previous to the commencement of this session of Parliament.

“ VI. *Provided also*, That nothing herein contained shall extend to authorize any Papist, or person professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion, to have, or keep in his hands or possession, any arms, armour, ammunition, or any warlike stores, sword-blades, barrels, locks or stocks of guns, or fire-arms, or to exempt such person from any forfeiture, or penalty inflicted by any act respecting arms, armour, or ammunition, in the hands or possession of any Papist, or respecting Papists having or keeping such warlike stores, save and except Papists, or persons of the Roman Catholic religion, seized of a freehold estate of one hundred pounds a year, or possessed of a personal estate of one thousand pounds or upwards, who are hereby authorized to keep arms and ammunition as Protestants now by law may; and also, save and except Papists or Roman Catholics possessing a freehold estate of ten pounds yearly value, and less than one hundred



relief, if honestly administered, to the smallest of the thirty-two counties. How it *was* used, not for relief, but for aggravation of the misery, we shall see hereafter. For that season's famine it was at any rate too late, and before any part of it became available many thousands had died of hunger. The London newspapers complacently stated that the impression "in political circles" was, that two millions of the people must perish before the next harvest.

January, February, and part of March passed away. Nothing was done for relief; but much preparation was made in the way of appointing hosts of commissioners and commissioners' clerks, and preparing the voluminous stationery, schedules, specifications, and red-tape to tie them up neatly, which so greatly embarrass all British official action—a very injurious sort of embarrassment in such a case as the Crimean war, but the very thing that did best service (to the Government) on the present occasion.\*

O'Connell, O'Brien, and some other repeal members, proceeded to London in March, to endeavour to stir up ministers, or at least discover what they were intending. In answer to Mr. O'Brien, Sir James Graham enumerated the grants and loans I have above mentioned, and added something about other public moneys, which, he said, were also available for relief of distress, adding:—

"Instructions have been given, on the responsibility of the Government, to meet every emergency. It would not be expedient for me to detail those instructions; but I may state, generally, there is no portion of this distress, however widespread or lamentable, on which Government have not endeavoured, on their own responsibility, to take the best precautions to give the best directions of which circumstances could admit."

O'Brien had just come from Ireland, where he had anxiously watched the progress of the "relief measures," and of the famine. He had seen that while the latter was quick, the former were slow; in fact, they had not then appeared in Ireland at all. But the very announcement that Government intended to interpose in some decisive manner had greatly hastened collection of rents and ejectment of tenants, and both hunger and its sure attendant, the typhus, were sweeping them off rapidly. British

ministers listened to all he could say with a calm, incredulous smile. "Have we not told you," they said, "we have sent persons—Englishmen, reliable men—to inquire into all those matters? Are we not going to meet every emergency?"

"Mr. W. S. O'Brien was bound to say, with regard to the sums of money mentioned by the right honourable baronet, as having been, on a former occasion, voted by the House for the relief of Ireland; that as far as his own information went, not one single guinea had ever been expended from those sources. He was also bound to tell the right honourable baronet that one hundred thousand of his fellow-creatures in Ireland were famishing."

And here the report adds: "The honourable gentleman, who appeared to labour under deep emotion, paused for a short time." Doubtless it was bitter to that haughty spirit to plead for his plundered people, as it were, *in forma pauperis*, before the plunderers; and their vulgar pride was soothed; but soon it was wounded again, for he added:—

"Under such circumstances, did it not become the House to consider of the way in which they could deal with the crisis? He would tell them frankly—and it was a feeling participated in by the majority of Irishmen—that he was not disposed to appeal to their generosity in the matter. They had taken and they had tied the purse-strings of the Irish purse!"

Whereupon the report records that there were cries of *Oh! oh!* They were scandalized at the idea of Ireland having a purse.

Notwithstanding this repeated repudiation of alms, all the appropriations of Parliament purporting to be for relief, but really calculated for aggravation of the Irish famine, were persistently called alms by the English press. These Irish, they said, are never done craving alms. It is true they did not *answer* our statement that we only demanded a small part of what was due; they chose to assume that the exchequer was *their* exchequer; neither did they think it fit to remember that Mr. O'Brien, and such as he, were by no means suffering from famine themselves, but were retrenching the expenses of their households at home to relieve those who were suffering. To the common English intellect it was enough to present this one idea—here are these starving Irish coming over to beg from *you*.

Thus it will be easy to appreciate the feelings which then prevailed in the two islands,—in Ireland, a vague and dim sense that we were somehow robbed; in

\* In April of next year (1846), Jones, Twisleton, &c., were enabled to report that they had sent to Ireland "ten thousand books, besides fourteen tons of paper."



England, a still more vague and blundering idea, that an impudent beggar was demanding their money, with a scowl in his eye and a threat upon his tongue.

In truth, only a few, either in England or in Ireland, fully understood the bloody game on the board. The two cardinal principles of the British policy in this business seem to have been these:—*First*, strict adherence to the principles of “political economy;” and, *second*, making the whole administration of the famine a Government concern. “Political economy” became, about the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws, a favourite study, or rather, indeed, the creed and gospel of England. Women and young boys were learned in its saving doctrines; one of the most fundamental of which was, “there must be no interference with the natural course of trade.” It was seen that this maxim would insure the transfer of the Irish wheat and beef to England; for that was what they called the natural course of trade. Moreover, this maxim would forbid the Government, or relief committees, to sell provisions in Ireland any lower than the market price—for this is an interference with the enterprise of private speculators; it would forbid the employment of Government ships—for this troubles individual shipowners; and further, and lastly, it was found (this invaluable maxim) to require that the public works, to be executed by labourers employed with borrowed public money, should be unproductive works—that is, works which would create no fund to pay their own expenses. There were many railroad companies at that time in Ireland that had got their charters—their roads have been made since; but it was in vain they asked them for Government advances, which they could have well secured, and soon paid off. The thing could not be done. Lending money to Irish railroad companies would be a discrimination against English companies—flat interference with private enterprise.

The other great leading idea completed Sir Robert's policy. It was to make the famine a strictly Government concern. The famine was to be administered strictly through officers of the Government, from high commissioners down to policemen. Even the Irish General Relief Committee, and other local committees of charitable persons, who were exerting themselves to raise funds to give employment, were either induced to act in subordination to a Government Relief Committee, which sat in Dublin Castle, or else were deterred from importation of food by the announcement in Parliament that the Government had given orders somewhere for the purchase of

foreign corn. For instance, the Mayor of Cork, and some principal inhabitants of that city, hurried to Dublin, and waited on the Lord-Lieutenant, representing that the local committee had applied for some portion of the Parliamentary loans, but “were refused assistance on some points of official form: that the people of that county were already famishing, and both food and labour were urgently needed. Lord Heytesbury simply recommended that they should communicate at once with the Government Relief Committee”—as for the rest, that they should consult the Board of Works. Thus every possible delay and official difficulty was interposed against the efforts of local bodies—Government was to do all. These things, together with the new measure for an increase in the police force (who were the main administrative agents throughout the country), led many persons to the conclusion that the enemy had resolved to avail themselves of the famine in order to increase Governmental supervision and *espionage*, so that every man, woman, and child in Ireland, with all their goings out and comings in, might be thoroughly known and registered; that when the mass of the people began to starve, their sole resource might be the police barracks; that Government might be all in all—omnipotent to give food or withhold it, to relieve or to starve, according to their own ideas of policy, and of good behaviour in the people.

It is needless to point out that Government patronage also was much extended by this system; and by the middle of the next year, 1847, there were ten thousand men salaried out of Parliamentary loans and grants for relief of the poor—as commissioners, inspectors, clerks, and so forth; and some of them with salaries equal to that of an American Secretary of State. So many of the middle classes had been dragged down almost to insolvency by the ruin of the country, that they began to be eager for the smaller places, as clerks and inspectors. For those ten thousand officers, then, it was estimated there were one hundred thousand applicants and canvassers—so much clear gain from “Repeal.”

The Repeal Association continued its regular meetings, and never ceased to represent that the true remedies for Irish famine were tenant-right, the stoppage of export, and repeal of the Union; and as those were really the true and only remedies, it was clear they were the only expedients which an English Parliament would *not* try. The repeal members gained a kind of Parliamentary victory, however, this spring. They caused the



defeat of the Coercion bill, with the aid of the Whigs. Sir Robert Peel had very cunningly, as he thought, made this bill precede the Corn Law Repeal bill; and as the English public was all now most eager for the cheapening of bread, he believed that all parties would make haste to pass his favourite measure first. The Irish members went to London; and knowing they could not influence legislation otherwise, organized a sort of mere mechanical resistance against the Coercion bill—that is, they opposed first reading, second reading, third reading, opposed its being referred to committee, moved endless amendments, made endless speeches, and insisted upon dividing the House on every clause. In vain it was represented to them that this was only delaying the Corn Law Repeal, which would “cheapen bread.” O’Brien replied that it would only cheapen bread to Englishmen, and enable them to devour more and more of the Irish bread, and give less for it. In vain ministers told them that they were stopping public business. They answered that English business was no business of theirs. In vain their courtesy was invoked. They could not afford to be courteous in such a case, and their sole errand in London was to resist an atrocious and torturing tyranny threatened against their poor countrymen.

Just before this famous debate, there had been very extensive clearing of tenantry in Connaught; and, in particular, one case in which a Mrs. Gerard had, with the aid of the troops and police, destroyed a whole village, and thrown out two hundred and seventy persons on the high-road. The *Nation* thus improved the circumstances with reference to the “Coercion bill”:—

“Some Irish member, for instance, may point to the two hundred and seventy persons thrown out of house and home the other day in Galway, and in due form of law (for it was all perfectly legal) turned adrift in their desperation upon the wide world, and may ask the minister, If any of these two hundred and seventy commit a robbery on the highway—if any of them murder the bailiff who (in exercise of his duty) flung out their naked children to perish in the winter’s sleet—if any of them, maddened by wolfish famine, break into a dwelling-house, and forcibly take food to keep body and soul together, or arms for vengeance—what will you do? How will you treat that district? Will you, indeed, *proclaim* it? Will you mulct the householders (not yet ejected) in a

heavy fine to compound for the crimes of those miserable outcasts, to afford food and shelter to whom they wrong their own children in this hard season? Besides sharing with those wretches his last potato, is the poor cottier to be told that he is to *pay* for policemen to watch them day and night—that he is to make atonement in money (though his spade and poor bedding should be auctioned to make it up) for any outrage, that may be done in the neighbourhood?—but that these GERARDS are not to pay one farthing for all this—for perhaps their property is encumbered, and, it may be, they find it hard enough to pay their interest, and keep up such establishments in town and country as befit their rank? And will you, indeed, issue your commands that those houseless and famishing two hundred and seventy—after their roof-trees were torn down, and the ploughshare run through the foundations of their miserable hovels—are to be *at home* from sunset to sunrise?—that if found straying, the jails and the penal colonies are ready for their reception?”

It was precisely with a view to meet such cases that the Coercion bill had been devised. The English Whigs, and, at length, the indignant Protectionists, too, joined the repealers in this resistance—not to spare Ireland, but to defeat Sir Robert Peel, and get into his place. And they did defeat Sir Robert Peel, and get into his place. Whereupon, it was not long before Lord John Russell and the Whigs devised a new and more murderous Coercion bill for Ireland themselves.

It was on the 25th of May, that the Coercion bill for Ireland was defeated—the first Coercion bill for Ireland that was ever refused by a British Parliament; and it was rejected, not by the exertions of Ireland’s friends, but by political combinations of her enemies.

Sir Robert Peel immediately resigned office, and left the responsibility of dealing with the Irish affair to the Whigs. He knew he might do so safely. His system was inaugurated. His two great ideas—free trade and police administration—were fully recognized by the Whigs; and Lord John Russell was even a blind bigot about what he imagined to be political economy. This “Liberal” statesman never had an idea of his own; and as the system of Sir Robert Peel was really the true and only English method of dealing with the Irish difficulty, it was quite certain that the Whigs would not only adopt it, but improve upon it.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

1846—1847.

Progress of the Famine Carnage—Pretended Relief Measures—Imprisonment of O'Brien—Dissensions in Repeal Association—Break-up of that Body—Ravages of Famine—"Labour Rate Act"—Useless Public Works—Extermination—Famine of 1847—How they Lived in England—Advances from the Treasury—Attempts of Foreign Countries to Relieve the Famine—Defeated by British Government—Vagrancy Act—Parish Coffins—Constant Repudiation of Alms—An Englishman's Petition for Alms to Ireland—"Ingratitude" of the Irish—Death of O'Connell—Preparations to Insure the Next Year's Famine—Emigration—British Famine Policy—New Coercion Act called for—Famine in Ireland.

IN the first year of the Famine, then, we find that the measures proposed by the English Government were, *first*, repeal of the Corn laws, which depreciated Ireland's only article of export; *second*, a new Coercion law, to torture and transport the people; and, *third*, a grant of £100,000 to certain clerks or commissioners, chiefly for their own profit, and from which the starving people derived no benefit whatever. Yet Ireland was taunted with this grant, as if it were *alms* granted to her. Double the sum (£200,000) was, *in the same session*, appropriated for Battersea Park, a suburban place of recreation much resorted to by Londoners.

It is to be observed that all the employment to be provided for the poor under this first "Relief Act," was to be given under the order and control of English officials; further, the professions of "Government"—that *they* had taken all needful measures to guard against famine—had made people rely upon them for everything, and thus turned the minds of thousands upon thousands from work of their own, which they might have attempted if left to themselves. This sort of government spoon-feeding is highly demoralizing; and for *one* who derived any relief from it, one thousand neglected their own industry in the pursuit of it.

In truth, the amount of relief offered by these grants was infinitesimally small, when we consider the magnitude of the calamity, and had no other effect than to unsettle the minds of the peasantry, and make them more careless about holding on to their farms.

It is true, also, that the Government did, to a certain small extent, speculate in Indian corn, and did send a good many cargoes of it to Ireland, and form depots of it at several points; but as to this, also, their mysterious intimations had led all the world to believe they would provide very large quantities, whereas, in fact, the

quantity imported by them was inadequate to supply the loss of the grain exported from any one county; and a Government ship, sailing into any harbour with Indian corn, was sure to meet half a dozen sailing out with Irish wheat and cattle. The effect of this, therefore, was only to blind the people to the fact that England was exacting her tribute as usual, famine or no famine. The effect of both combined was to engender a dependent and pauper spirit, and to free England from all anxiety about "repeal." A landless hungry *pauper* cannot afford to think of the honour of his country, and cares nothing about a national flag.

How powerfully the whole of this system and procedure contributed to accomplish the great end of uprooting the people from the soil, one can readily understand. The exhibition and profession of public "relief" for the destitute, stifled compunction in the landlords; and agents, bailiffs, and police swept whole districts with the besom of destruction.

Another act had been done by Sir Robert Peel's Ministry, just before retiring, with a view of breaking up the Repeal Association. This was the imprisonment of Mr. Smith O'Brien several weeks in the cellar of the House of Commons. It grievously irritated the enemy that O'Connell, O'Brien, and the repeal members, still continued to absent themselves from Parliament. The House of Commons tried various methods of persuading or coercing them to London. Mr. Hume had written them a friendly letter imploring them to come over to their legislative duties, and *he* would aid them in obtaining justice for Ireland. A "call of the House" was proposed; but they declared beforehand, that if there were a call of the House they would not obey it, and the Sergeant-at-Arms must come to Ireland for them—he would find them in Conciliation Hall. They were nominated on English railroad committees, and the proper officer had intimated to them the fact. They replied that they were attending to more important business. Now, when they went over to oppose the Coercion bill, it was understood that this was to be their sole errand, and they were not to engage themselves in the ordinary details of legislation. But they were not long in London before the opportunity was seized to place their names on railway committees. O'Connell and his son both obeyed the call. O'Brien, of course, refused, and was imprisoned in the cellar for "contempt."

London and all England were highly pleased and entertained. The press was



brilliant upon the great "Brian Boru" in a cellar; and Mr. O'Brien was usually afterwards termed (with that fine sarcasm so characteristic of English genius) the "martyr of the cellar."

Instantly arose dissension in the Repeal Association. To approve and fully sustain O'Brien's action in refusing to serve, would be to censure O'Connell for serving. In that body a sort of unsatisfactory compromise was made, but the "Eighty-two Club," where the *young* party was stronger, voted a warm address of full approval to O'Brien (who was a member of the club), and dispatched several members to present it to him in his dungeon.

The divisions in O'Connell's Association were soon brought to a crisis when the Whigs came in. O'Connell instantly gave up all agitation of the Repeal question, and took measures to separate himself from those "juvenile members" who, as he declared Lord John Russell had asserted, were plotting not only to repeal the Union, but to sever the connection with England ("the golden link of the Crown"), and that by *physical force*. All this famous controversy seems now of marvellously small moment; but a very concise narrative of it may be found in Mr. O'Brien's words, which will be enough:—

"Negotiations were opened between Mr. O'Connell and the Whigs at Chesham Place. 'Young Ireland' protested in the strongest terms against an alliance with the Whigs. Mr. O'Connell took offence at the language used by Mr. Meagher and others. When I arrived in Dublin, after the resignation of Sir Robert Peel, I learned that he contemplated a rupture with the writers of the *Nation*. Before I went to the County of Clare, I communicated, through Mr. Ray, a special message to Mr. O'Connell, who was then absent from Dublin, to the effect, that though I was most anxious to preserve a neutral position, I could not silently acquiesce in any attempt to expel the *Nation* or its party from the Association. Next came the Dungarvan election, and the new "moral force" resolutions. I felt it my duty to protest against both at the Kilrush dinner. Upon my return to Dublin, I found a public letter from Mr. O'Connell, formally denouncing the *Nation*; and no alternative was left me but to declare, that if that letter were acted upon, I could not co-operate any longer with the Repeal Association. The celebrated two-day debate then took place. Mr. J. O'Connell opened an attack upon the *Nation* and upon its adherents. Mr. Mitchel and Mr. Meagher defended them-

selves in language which, it seemed to me, did not transgress the bounds of decorum or of legal safety. Mr. John O'Connell interrupted Mr. Meagher in his speech, and declared that he could not allow him to proceed with the line of argument necessary to sustain the principles which had been arraigned. I protested against this interruption. Mr. J. O'Connell then gave us to understand that unless Mr. Meagher desisted, he must leave the hall. I could not acquiesce in this attempt to stifle a fair discussion, and sooner than witness the departure of Mr. J. O'Connell from an association founded by his father, I preferred to leave the assembly."\*

When O'Brien left the assembly, he was accompanied by his friends, and there was an end of the Repeal Association, save as a machinery of securing offices for O'Connell's dependents. Even for that purpose it was not efficient, because it had too clearly become impotent and hollow; there was no danger in it, and ministers would not buy a patriot in that market, unless at a very low figure.

In the meantime, the famine and the fever raged; many landlords regained possession without so much as an ejection, because the tenant died of hunger; and the county coroners, before the end of this year, were beginning to strike work—they were so often called to sit upon famine-slain corpses. The verdict, "Death by starvation," became so familiar that the county newspapers sometimes omitted to record it; and travellers were often appalled when they came upon some lonely village by the western coast, with the people all skeletons upon their own hearths. Irish landlords are not all monsters of cruelty. Thousands of them, indeed, kept far away from the scene, collected their rents through agents and bailiffs, and spent them in England or in Paris. But the resident landlords and their families did, in many cases, devote themselves to the task of saving their poor people alive. Many remitted their rents, or half their rents; and ladies kept their servants busy and their kitchens smoking with continual preparation of food for the poor. Local committees soon purchased all the corn in the Government depôts (at market price, however), and distributed it gratuitously. Clergymen, both Protestant and Catholic, generally did their duty; except those absentee clergymen, bishops, and wealthy rectors, who usually reside in England, their services being not needed in the places from whence they draw their wealth. But

\* Mr. O'Brien's letter to Dr. Miley, December, 1846.



many a poor rector and his curate shared their crust with their suffering neighbours; and priests, after going round all day administering extreme unction to whole villages at once, all dying of mere starvation, often themselves went supperless to bed.

The details of this frightful famine, as it ravaged those Western districts, need not be narrated. It is enough to say, that in this year, 1846, not less than three hundred thousand perished, either of mere hunger or of typhus fever caused by hunger. But, as it has ever since been the main object of the British Government to conceal the amount of the carnage (which, indeed, they ought to do if they can), we find that the Census Commissioners, in their report for 1851, admit only two thousand and forty-one "registered" deaths by famine alone.

A Whig ministry, however, was now in power; and the people were led to expect great efforts on the part of Government to stay the progress of ruin. In August, it became manifest that the potato crop of '46 was also a total failure; but the products otherwise were most abundant—much more than sufficient to feed all the people. Again, therefore, it became the urgent business of British policy to promise large "relief," so as to insure that the splendid harvest should be allowed peacefully to be shipped to England as before; and the first important measure of the Whigs was to propose a renewal of the *Disarming Act*, and a further increase in the police force. Apparently, the outcry raised against this had the effect of shaming ministers, for they suddenly dropped the bill for this time. But the famine could not be correctly administered without a Coercion bill of some sort; so the next year they devised a machinery of this kind, the most stringent and destructive that had yet been prescribed for Ireland. In the meantime, for "relief" of the famine, they brought forward their famous *Labour Rate Act*.

This was, in few words, an additional Poor rate, payable by the same persons liable to the other Poor rates; the proceeds to be applied to the execution of such public works as the Government might choose; the control and superintendence to be intrusted to Government officers. Money was to be, in the meantime, advanced from the Treasury, in order to set the people immediately to work; and that advance was to be repaid in ten years by means of the increased rate. There was to be an appearance of local control, inasmuch as barony sessions of

landlords and justices were to have power to meet (under the Lord-Lieutenant's order), and suggest any works they might think needful, provided these were strictly unproductive works; but the control of all was to be in the Government alone.

Now, the class which suffered most from the potato blight consisted of those small farmers who were barely able, in ordinary years, to keep themselves above starvation after paying their rents. These people, by the Labour Rate Act, had an additional tax laid on them; and not being able to pay it, could but quit their holdings, sink to the class of able-bodied paupers, and enrol themselves in a gang of Government *navvies*; thus throwing themselves for support upon those who still strove to maintain themselves by their own labour on their own land.

In addition to the proceeds of the new Poor rate, Parliament appropriated a further sum of £50,000, to be applied in giving work in some absolutely pauper districts where there was no hope of ever raising rates to repay it. £50,000 was just the sum which was that same year voted out of the English and Irish revenue to improve the buildings of the British Museum.

So there was to be *more* Poor law, more commissioners (this time under the title of Additional Public Works Commissioners), innumerable officials in the public works, commissariat and constabulary departments, and no end of stationery and red-tape, *all* to be paid out of the rates. On the whole, it was hoped that provision was made for stopping the "Irish howl" this one season.

Irishmen of all classes had almost universally condemned the Poor law at first; so, as they did not like Poor law, they were to have *more* Poor law. Society in Ireland was to be reconstructed on the basis of Poor rates, and a broad foundation of able-bodied pauperism. It did not occur to the English, and it never will occur to them, that the way to stop Irish destitution is to repeal the Union, so that Irishmen might make their own laws, use their own resources, regulate their own industry. It was in vain, however, that anybody in Ireland remonstrated. In vain that such journals as were of the popular party condemned the whole scheme. The *Nation* of that date treats it thus:—

"Unproductive work to be executed with borrowed money; a ten years' mortgage of a new tax, to pay for cutting down hills and filling them up again; a direct impost upon landed proprietors, in the most offensive form, to feed all the



rest of the population; impoverishing the rich without benefiting the poor; not creating, not developing, but merely transferring, and in the transfer wasting, the means of all; perhaps human ingenuity, sharpened by intensest malignity, could contrive no more deadly and unerring method of arraying class against class in diabolical hatred, making them look on one another with wolfish eyes, as if to prepare the way for "*aristocrates à la lanterne!*" killing individual enterprise, discouraging private improvement, dragging down employers and employed, proprietors, farmers, mechanics, and cottiers, to one common and irretrievable ruin."

It may seem astonishing that the gentry of Ireland did not rouse themselves at this frightful prospect, and universally demand the repeal of the Union. They were the same class, sons of the same men who had, in 1782, wrested the independence of Ireland from the English Government, and enjoyed the fruits of that independence in honour, wealth, and prosperity for eighteen years. Why not now? It is because, in 1782, the Catholics of Ireland counted as nothing; now they are numerous, enfranchised, exasperated; and the Irish landlords dare not trust themselves in Ireland without British support. They looked on tamely, therefore, and saw this deliberate scheme for the pauperization of a nation. They knew it would injure themselves; but they took the injury, took insult along with it, and submitted to be reproached for begging *alms*, when they demanded restitution of a part of their own means.

Over the whole island, for the next few months, was a scene of confused and wasteful attempts at relief—bewildered barony sessions striving to understand the voluminous directions, schedules, and specifications under which alone they could vote their own money to relieve the poor at their own doors; but generally making mistakes, for the unassisted human faculties never could comprehend those ten thousand books and fourteen tons of paper; insolent commissioners, and inspectors, and clerks snubbing them at every turn, and ordering them to study the documents; efforts on the part of the proprietors to expend some of the rates at least on useful works, reclaiming land or the like, which efforts were always met with flat refusal and a lecture on political economy (for political economy, it seems, declared that the works must be strictly useless—as cutting down a road where there was no hill, or building a bridge where there was no water—until many good roads became impassable on

account of pits and trenches); plenty of jobbing and speculation all this while; and the labourers, having the example of a great public fraud before their eyes, themselves defrauding their fraudulent employers—quitting agricultural pursuits and crowding to the public works, where they pretended to be cutting down hills and filling up hollows, and with tongue in cheek received half wages for doing nothing. So the labour was wasted, the labourers were demoralized, and the next year's famine was insured.

Now began to be a rage for extermination beyond any former time; and many thousands of the peasants who could still scrape up the means fled to the sea, as if pursued by wild beasts, and betook themselves to America. The British army, also, received numberless recruits this year (for it is sound English policy to keep our people so low that a shilling a day would tempt them to fight for the devil, not to say the Queen); and insane mothers began to eat their young children who died of famine before them; and still fleets of ships were sailing with every tide, carrying Irish cattle and corn to England. There was also a large importation of grain from England into Ireland, especially of Indian corn; and the speculators and shipowners had a good time. Much of the grain thus brought to Ireland had been previously exported from Ireland, and came back laden with merchants' profits, and double freights, and insurance, to the helpless people who had sowed and reaped it. This is what commerce and free trade did for Ireland in those days.

Two facts, however, are essential to be borne in mind—*first*, that the net result of this importation, exportation, and re-importation (though many a ship-load was carried four times across the Irish Sea, as prices "*invited*" it) was, that England finally received the harvests to the same amount as before; and *second*, that she gave Ireland, under free trade in corn, less for it than ever. In other words, it took more of the Irish produce to buy a piece of cloth from a Leeds manufacturer, or to buy a rent receipt from an absentee proprietor.

Farmers could do without the cloth, but as for the rent receipts, these they must absolutely buy; for the bailiff, with his police, was usually at the door even before the fields were reaped; and he, and the Poor rate collector, and the additional Poor rate collector, and the county cess collector, and the process-server with decrees, were all to be paid out of the first proceeds. If it took the farmer's whole crop to pay them, which



it usually did, he had, at least, a pocketful of receipts, and might see lying in the next harbour the very ship that was to carry his entire harvest and his last cow to England.

What wonder that so many farmers gave up the effort in despair, and sunk to paupers? Many Celts were cleared off this year, and the campaign was so far successful.

The winter of 1846-47, and succeeding spring, were employed in a series of utterly unavailing attempts to use the "Labour Rate Act," so as to afford some sensible relief to the famishing people. Sessions were held, as provided by the Act, and the landed proprietors liberally imposed rates to repay such Government advances as they thought needful; but the unintelligible directions constantly interrupted them, and, in the meantime, the peasantry, in the wild blind hope of public relief, were abandoning their farms, and letting the land lie idle.

Even the Tory or British party in Ireland furnish ample testimony to this deplorable state of things. From Limerick we learn, through the *Dublin Evening Mail*:—

"There is not a labourer employed in the county except on public works; and there is every prospect of the lands remaining untilled and unsown for the next year."

In Cork, writes the *Cork Constitution*:—

"The good intentions of the Government are frustrated by the worst regulations—regulations which, diverting labour from its legitimate channels, left the fields without hands to prepare them for the harvest."

At a Presentment Session in Shanagolden, after a hopeless discussion as to what possible meaning could be latent in the Castle "instructions," and "supplemental instructions," the Knight of Glin, a landlord of those parts, said that, "while on the subject of mistakes," he might as well mention, "on the Glin Road some people are filling up the original cutting of a hill with the stuff they had taken out of it. That's another slice out of our £450"—

Which he and the other proprietors of that barony had to pay. For you must bear in mind that all the advances under this Act were to be strictly *loans*, repayable by the rates secured by the whole value of the land, and at higher interest than the Government borrowed the money so advanced.

The innocent Knight of Glin ascribed the perversions of labour to "mistake." But there was no mistake at all. Dig-

ging holes and filling them up again was precisely the kind of work prescribed in such case by the principles of political economy; and then there were innumerable regulations to be attended to before even this kind of work could be given. The Board of Works would have the roads torn up with such tools as they approved of, and none other—that is, with picks and short shovels; and picks and short shovels were manufactured in England, and sent over by ship-loads for that purpose, to the great profit of the hardware merchants in Birmingham. Often there were no adequate supply of these on the spot; then the work was to be *task-work*, and the poor people, delving macadamized roads with spades and turf-cutters, could not earn as much as would keep them alive, though luckily they were thereby disabled from destroying so much good road.

That all interests in the country were swiftly rushing to ruin was apparent to all. A committee of lords and gentlemen was formed, called "Reproductive Committee," to urge upon the Government that, if the country was to tax itself to supply public work, the labour ought, in some cases at least, to be employed upon tasks that might be of use. This movement was so far successful that it elicited a letter from the Castle, authorizing such application, but with supplemental instructions so intricate and occult that this also was fruitless.

And the people perished more rapidly than ever. The famine of 1847 was far more terrible and universal than that of the previous year. The Whig Government, bound by political economy, absolutely refused to interfere with market prices, and the merchants and speculators were never so busy on both sides of the Channel. In this year it was that the Irish famine began to be a world's wonder, and men's hearts were moved in the uttermost ends of the earth by the recital of its horrors. The *London Illustrated News* began to be adorned with engravings of tottering windowless hovels in Skibbereen, and elsewhere, with naked wretches dying on a truss of wet straw; and the constant language of English ministers and members of Parliament created the impression abroad that Ireland was in need of *alms*, and nothing but alms; whereas Irishmen themselves uniformly protested that what they required was a repeal of the Union, so that the English might cease to devour their substance.

It may be interesting to know how the English people were faring all this while;



and whether "that portion of the United Kingdom," as it is called, suffered much by the famine in Ireland and in Europe. Authentic *data* upon this point are to be found in the financial statement of Sir Charles Wood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in February, 1847. In that statement he declares, and he tells it, he says, with great satisfaction, that "the English people and working classes" were steadily growing more comfortable, nay, more luxurious in their style of living. He goes into particulars even, to show how rapidly a taste for good things spreads amongst English labourers, and bids his hearers "recollect that consumption could not be accounted for by attributing it to the higher and wealthier classes, but must have arisen from the consumption of the large body of the people and the working classes."

In the matter of *coffee*, they had used nearly seven million pounds of it more than they did in 1843. Of *butter* and *cheese* they devoured double as much within the year as they had done three years before within the same period. "I will next," says the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "take *currants*" (for currants are one of the necessities of life to an English labourer, who must have his pudding on Sunday at least); and we find that the quantity of currants used by the "body of the people and working classes" had increased in three years, from two hundred and fifty-four thousand hundredweight to three hundred and fifty-nine thousand hundredweight by the year. Omitting other things, we come to the Chancellor's statement, that since 1843 the consumption of *tea* had increased by five million four hundred thousand pounds. It is unnecessary to say they had as much beef and bacon as they could eat, and bread *à discrétion*, and beer!

This statement was read by Sir Charles Wood at the end of a long speech, in which he announced the necessity of raising an additional loan to keep life in some of the surviving Irish; and he read it expressly in order "to dispel some portion of the gloom which had been cast over the minds of members," by being told that a portion of the surplus revenue must go to pay interest on a slight addition to the national debt. And the gloom *was* dispelled; and honourable members comforted themselves with the reflection, that whatever be the nominal debt of the country, after all, a man of the working classes can ask no more than a good dinner every day, and a pudding on Sundays.

One would not grudge the English

labourer his dinner or his tea. And we refer to his excellent table only to bid the reader remark that during those same three years, exactly as fast as the English people and working classes advanced to luxury, the Irish people and working classes sank to starvation; and further, that the Irish people were still sowing and reaping what they of the sister island so contentedly devoured, to the value of at least £17,000,000 sterling.

As an English farmer, artizan, or labourer began to insist on tea in the morning as well as in the evening, an Irish farmer, artizan, or labourer, found it necessary to live on one meal a day; for every Englishman who added to his domestic expenditure by a pudding thrice a week, an Irishman had to retrench *his* to cabbage leaves and turnip tops; as dyspepsia creeps into England, dysentery ravages Ireland; "and the exact correlative of a Sunday dinner in England is a coroner's inquest in Ireland."

Ireland, however, was to have "alms." The English would not see their useful drudges perish at their very door for want of a trifle of alms. So the ministry announced in this month of February a new loan of ten millions, to be used from time to time for relief of Irish famine—the half of the advances to be repaid by rates, the other half to be a grant from the Treasury to feed able-bodied paupers for doing useless work, or no work at all. As to this latter half of the ten millions, English newspapers and members of Parliament said that it was so much English money granted to Ireland. This of course was a falsehood. It was a loan raised by the Imperial Treasury on a mortgage of the taxation of the three kingdoms; and the principal of it, like the rest of the "national debt," was not intended to be ever repaid; and as for the interest, Ireland would have to pay her proportion of it, as a matter of course.

This last Act was the *third* of the "relief measures" contrived by the British Parliament, and the most destructive of all. It was to be put in operation as a system of out-door relief; and the various local boards of Poor law guardians, if they could only understand the documents, were to have some apparent part in its administration, but all, as usual, under the absolute control of the Poor Law Commissioners, and of a new Board—namely, Sir John Burgoyne, an engineer; Sir Randolph Routh, Commissary-General; Mr. Twisleton, a Poor Law Commissioner; two Colonels, called Jones and M'Gregor, police inspectors; and Mr. Redington, Under Secretary.



In the administration of this system there were to be many thousands of officials, great and small. The largest salaries were for Englishmen, but the smaller were held up as an object of ambition to Irishmen; and it is very humiliating to remember what eager and greedy multitudes were always canvassing and petitioning for these.

In the new Act of the out-door relief there was one significant clause. It was, that if any farmer who held land should be forced to apply for aid under this Act, for himself and his family, he should not have it until he had first given up all his land to the landlord—except one quarter of an acre. It was called the quarter-acre clause, and was found the most efficient and the cheapest of all the Ejectment Acts. Farms were thereafter daily given up, without the formality of a notice to quit, or summons before quarter sessions.

On the 6th of March, there were seven hundred and thirty thousand *heads* of families on the public works. Provision was made by the last-recited Act for dismissing these in batches. On the 10th of April, the number was reduced to five thousand seven hundred and twenty-three. Afterwards, batches of a hundred thousand or so were in like manner dismissed. Most of these had now neither house nor home; and their only resource was in the out-door relief. For this they were ineligible, if they held but one rood of land. Under the new law it was able-bodied idlers only who were to be fed—to attempt to till even a rood of ground was death.

Steadily, but surely, the "Government" was working out its calculation; and the product anticipated by "political circles" was likely to come out about September, in round numbers—*two millions of Irish corpses*.

That "Government" had at length got into its own hands all the means and materials for working this problem, is now plain. There was no longer any danger of the elements of the account being disturbed by external interference of any kind. At one time, indeed, there were odds against the Government sum coming out right; for charitable people in England and America, indignant at the thought of a nation perishing of political economy, did contribute generously, and did full surely believe that every pound they subscribed would give Irish famine twenty shillings worth of bread; they thought so, and poured in their contributions, and their prayers and blessings with them.

In vain! "Government" and political

economy got hold of the contributions, and disposed of them in such fashion as to prevent their deranging the calculations of political circles.

For example, the vast supplies of food purchased by the "British Relief Association," with the money of charitable Christians in England, were everywhere locked up in Government stores. Government, it seems, contrived to influence or control the managers of that fund; and thus there were thousands of tons of food rotting within the stores of Haulbowline, at Cork Harbour; and tens of thousands rotting without. For the market must be followed, not led (to the prejudice of Liverpool merchants!)—private speculation must not be disappointed, nor the calculations of political circles falsified!

All the nations of the earth might be defied to feed or relieve Ireland, beset by such a Government as this. America tried another plan. The ship *Jamestown* sailed into Cork Harbour, and discharged a large cargo, which actually began to come into consumption; when lo! Free Trade—another familiar demon of Government—Free Trade, that carried off our own harvests of the year before—comes in, freights another ship, and carries off from Cork to Liverpool a cargo *against* the American cargo. For the private speculators must be compensated; the markets must not be *led*; if these Americans will not give England their corn to lock up, then she defeats them by "the natural laws of trade!" So many Briarean hands has Government—so surely do official persons work their account.

Private charity, one might think, in a country like Ireland, would put out the calculating Government sadly; but that, too, was brought in great measure under control. The "Temporary Relief Act," talking of eight millions of money (*to be used if needed*)—distributing, like Cumæan Sybil, its mystic leaves by the myriad and the million—setting charitable people everywhere to con its pamphlets, and compare clause with clause—putting everybody in terror of its rates, and in horror of its inspectors—was likely to pass the summer bravely. It would begin to be partly understood about August, would expire in September;—and in September the "persons" connected with Government" expended their round two millions of carcasses.

A further piece of the machinery, all working to the same great end, was the "Vagrancy Act," for the punishment of vagrants—that is, of about four millions of the inhabitants—by hard labour, "for any time not exceeding one month."



Many poor people were escaping to England, as deck-passengers, on board the numerous steamers, hoping to earn their living by labour there; but "Government" took alarm about typhus fever—a disease not intended for England. Orders in Council were suddenly issued, subjecting all vessels having *deck passengers* to troublesome examination and quarantine, thereby quite stopping up that way of escape; and, six days afterwards, four steamship companies, between England and Ireland, on request of the Government, raised the rate of passage for deck passengers. Cabin passengers were not interfered with in any way; for, in fact, it is the cabin passengers from Ireland who spend in England five millions sterling *per annum*.

Whither now were the people to fly? Where to hide themselves? They had no money to emigrate, no food, no land, no roof over them, no hope before them. They began to envy the lot of those who had died in the first year's famine. The poor houses were all full, and much more than full. Each of them was an hospital for typhus fever; and it was very common for three fever patients to be in one bed, some dead, and others not yet dead. Parishes all over the country being exhausted by rates, refused to provide coffins for the dead paupers, and they were thrown coffinless into holes; but in some parishes (in order to have, at least, the look of decent interment), a coffin was made with its bottom hinged at one side, and closed at the other by a latch—the uses of which are obvious.

It would be easy to horrify the reader with details of this misery; but let it be enough to give the results in round numbers. Great efforts were this year made to give relief by private charity; and sums contributed in that way by Irishmen themselves far exceeded all that was sent from all other parts of the world besides. As for the ship-loads of corn generously sent over by Americans, it has been already shown how the benevolent object was defeated. The moment it appeared in any port, prices became a shade lower; and so much the more grain was carried off from Ireland by "free trade." It was not foreign corn that Ireland wanted—it was the use of her own; that is to say, it was repeal of the Union.

The arrangements and operations of the Union had been such that Ireland was bleeding at every vein; her life was rushing out at every pore; so that the money sent to her for charity was only so much added to landlords' rents and Englishmen's profits. The American corn was

only so much given as a handsome present to the merchants and speculators—that is, the English got it.

But no Irishman begged the world for alms. The benevolence of Americans, and Australians, and Turks, and Negro slaves, was excited by the appeals of the English press and English members of Parliament; and in Ireland many a cheek burned with shame and indignation at our country being thus held up to the world, by the people who were feeding on our vitals, as abject beggars of broken victuals. The Repeal Association, low as it had fallen, never sanctioned this mendicancy. The true nationalists of Ireland, who had been forced to leave that Association, and had formed another society, the "Irish Confederation," never ceased to expose the real nature of these British dealings—never ceased to repudiate and disavow the British beggarly appeals; although they took care to express warm gratitude for the well-meant charity of foreign nations; and never ceased to proclaim that the sole and all-sufficient "relief measure" for the country would be, that the English should let us alone.

On the 16th of March, for example, a meeting of the citizens of Dublin assembled, by public requisition, at the Music Hall, presided over by the Lord Mayor, expressly to consider the peril of the country, and petition Parliament for proper remedies. It was known that the conveners of the meeting contemplated nothing more than suggestions as to importing grain in ships of war, stopping distillation from grain, and other trifles. Richard O'Gorman was then a prominent member of the Irish Confederation; and being a citizen of Dublin, he resolved to attend this meeting, and if nobody else should say the right word, say it himself. After some helpless talk about the "mistakes" and "infatuation" of Parliament, and suggestions for change in various details, O'Gorman rose, and in a powerful and indignant speech moved this resolution:—

"That for purposes of temporary relief, as well as permanent improvement, the one great want and demand of Ireland is, that foreign legislators and foreign ministers shall no longer interfere in the management of her affairs."

In this speech he charged the Government with being the "murderers of the people," and said:—

"Mr. Fitzgibbon has suggested that the measures of Government may have been adopted under an infatuation. I believe there is no infatuation. I hold a very different opinion on the subject. I think the



British Government are *doing what they intend to do.*"

Another citizen of Dublin seconded Mr. O'Gorman's resolution, and the report of his observations has these sentences:—

"I have listened with pain and disappointment to the proceedings of a meeting purporting to be a meeting of the citizens of Dublin, called at such a crisis, and to deliberate upon so grave a subject, yet at which the resolutions and speakers, as with one consent, have carefully avoided speaking out what nine-tenths of us feel to be the plain truth in this matter. But the truth, my lord, must be told—and the truth is, that Ireland starves and perishes, simply because the English have eaten us out of house and home. Moreover, that all the legislation of their Parliament is, and will be, directed to this one end—to enable them hereafter to eat us out of house and home as heretofore. It is for that sole end they have laid their grasp upon Ireland, and it is for that, and that alone, they will try to keep her."

Greatly to the consternation of the quiet and submissive gentlemen who had convened the meeting, O'Gorman's resolution was adopted by overwhelming acclamation.

Take another illustration of the spirit in which British charity was received by the Irish people. The harvest of Ireland was abundant and superabundant in 1847, as it had been the year before. The problem was, as before, to get it quietly and peacefully over to England. First, the Archbishop of Canterbury issued a form of thanksgiving for an "abundant harvest," to be read in all churches on Sunday, the 17th of October. One Trevelyan, a Treasury clerk, had been sent over to Ireland on some pretence of business, and the first thing he did when he landed was to transmit to England a humble intreaty that the Queen would deign to issue a Royal "Letter," asking alms in all the churches on the day of thanksgiving. The petition was complied with; the *Times* grumbled against those eternal Irish beggars; and the affair was thus treated in the *Nation*, which certainly spoke for the people more authentically than any other journal:—

"Cordially, eagerly, thankfully, we agree with the English *Times*, in this one respect—*there ought to be no alms for Ireland.*

"It is an impudent proposal, and ought to be rejected with scorn and contumely. We are sick of this eternal begging. If but one voice in Ireland should be raised against it, that voice shall be ours. To-morrow, to-morrow, over broad England,

Scotland, and Wales, the people who devour our substance from year to year are to offer up their canting thanksgivings for our 'abundant harvest,' and fling us certain crumbs and crusts of it for charity. Now, if any church-going Englishman will hearken to us, if we may be supposed in any degree to speak for our countrymen, we put up our petition *thus*: 'Keep your alms, ye canting robbers—button your pockets upon the Irish plunder that is in them—and let the begging-box pass on. Neither as *loans* nor as *alms* will we take that which is our own. We spit upon the benevolence that robs us of a pound, and flings back a penny in *charity*. Contribute now if you will—these will be your thanks!'

"But who has craved this charity? Why, the Queen of England, and her Privy-Council, and two officers of her Government, named Trevelyan and Burgoyne! No Irishman, that we know of, has begged alms from England.

"But the English insist on our remaining beggars. Charitable souls that they are! they like better to give us charity than let us earn our bread. And consider the time when this talk of almsgiving begins: our 'abundant harvest,' for which they are to thank God to-morrow, is still here; and there has been talk of keeping it here. So they say to one another: 'Go to; let us promise them charity and church subscriptions—they are a nation of beggars—they would rather have alms than honest earnings—let us talk of *alms*, and they will send us the bread from their tables, the cattle from their pastures, and the coats from their backs.'

"We charge the 'Government,' we charge the Cabinet Council at Osborne House, with this base plot. We tell our countrymen that a man named Trevelyan, a Treasury clerk—the man who advised and administered the Labour-Rate Act—that this Trevelyan has been sent to Ireland, that he, an Englishman, may send over from this side the Channel a petition to the charitable in England. We are to be made to beg, whether we will or no. The Queen begs for us; the Archbishop of Canterbury begs for us; and they actually send a man to Ireland that a veritable Irish begging petition may not be wanting.

"From Salt Hill Hotel, at Kingstown, this piteous cry goes forth to England. 'In justice,' Trevelyan says, 'to those who have appointed a general collection in the churches on the 17th, and still more in pity to the unhappy people in the Western districts of Ireland,' he implores his countrymen to have mercy; and gets his



letter published in the London papers (along with another from Sir John Burgoyne), to stimulate the charity of those good and well-fed Christians who will enjoy the luxury of benevolence to-morrow.

"Once more, then, we scorn, we repulse, we curse, all English alms; and only wish these sentiments of ours could reach, before noon to-morrow, every sanctimonious thanksgiver in England, Scotland, Wales, and Berwick-upon-Tweed."

In the same number the *Nation* took the pains to collect and present statistics by which it appeared that *every day*, one day with another, twenty large steamships, not counting sailing vessels, left Ireland for England, all laden with that "abundant harvest," for which the English, indeed, might well give thanks in their churches.

It must be acknowledged that if the English Government and people really and truly did endeavour to relieve the famine in their sister country, that generosity met a most ungrateful return—from a people, too, who are proverbially warm-hearted.

For the famine of 1847, it is only needful to add that, during this year, coroners' juries in several counties repeatedly, on inquests over famine-slain corpses, found, upon their oaths, verdicts of "Wilful Murder against John Russell, commonly called Lord John Russell," he being then the Queen's Prime Minister.

The verdict was perfectly justifiable, and the crime quite manifest; but as there was no power to bring the criminal over to Ireland for trial, and as there would have been no use in arraigning him before an English jury, he was never brought to justice.

It is essential that foreign nations should never believe, for the future, (what the English press has diligently inculcated), that our people, when smitten by famine, fell a-begging from England or from America. Let them never hereafter wonder when they meet with Irishmen ungrateful for the "relief measures"—and, above all, if Ireland should again starve (as she is most likely to do), and should still be under British dominion, let them never send her a bushel of corn or a dollar of money. Neither bushel nor dollar will ever reach her.

In February, 1847, and amidst the deepest gloom and horror of the famine, O'Connell, old, sick, and heavy-laden, left Ireland, and left it for ever. Physicians in London recommended a journey to the south of Europe, and O'Connell himself desired to see the Pope before he died, and to breathe out his soul at Rome, in the

choicest odour of sanctity. By slow and painful stages he proceeded only as far as Genoa, and there died on the 15th of May.

For those who were not close witnesses of Irish politics in that day—who did not see how vast this giant figure loomed in Ireland and in England for a generation and a half—it is not easy to understand the strong emotion caused by his death, both in friends and enemies. Yet, for a whole year before, he had sunk low indeed. His power had departed from him; and in presence of the terrible apparition of his perishing country, he had seemed to shrink and wither. Nothing can be conceived more helpless than his speeches in Conciliation Hall, and his appeals to the British Parliament during that time; yet, as I before said, he never begged *alms* for Ireland—he never fell so low as that; and the last sentences of the very last letter he ever penned to the Association still proclaim the true doctrine:—

"It will not be until after the deaths of hundreds of thousands that the regret will arise that more was not done to save a sinking nation.

"How different would the scene be if we had our own Parliament—taking care of our own people—of our own resources. But, alas! alas! it is scarcely permitted to think of these, the only sure preventatives of misery, and the only sure instruments of Irish prosperity."

To no Irishman can the wonderful life of O'Connell fail to be impressive—from the day when, a fiery and thoughtful boy, he sought the cloisters of St. Omers for the education which penal laws denied him in his own land, on through the manifold struggles and victories of his earlier career, as he broke and flung off, with a kind of haughty impatience, link after link of the social and political chain that six hundred years of steady British policy had woven around every limb and muscle of his country, down to that supreme moment of the blackness of darkness for himself and for Ireland, when he laid down his burden and closed his eyes. Beyond a doubt his death was hastened by the misery of seeing his proud hopes dashed to the earth, and his well-beloved people perishing; for there dwelt in that brawny frame tenderness and pity soft as a woman's. To the last he laboured on the "Relief Committees" of Dublin, and thought every hour lost unless employed in rescuing some of the doomed.

O'Connell's body rests in Ireland, but without his heart. He gave orders that the heart should be removed from his body and sent to Rome: The funeral was a great and mournful procession through



the streets of Dublin; and it will show how wide was the alienation which divided him from his former confederates, that, when O'Brien signified a wish to attend the obsequies, a public letter from John O'Connell sullenly forbade him.

In the year 1847 great and successful exertions were used to make sure that the next year should be a year of famine too. This was effected mainly by holding out the prospect of "out-door relief"—to obtain which tenants must abandon their lands and leave them untilled. A paragraph from a letter of Mr. Fitzpatrick, parish priest of Skibbereen, contains within it an epitome of the history of that year. It was published in the *Freeman*, March 12th:—

"The ground continues unsown and uncultivated. There is a mutual distrust between the landlord and the tenant. The landlord would wish, if possible, to *get up his land*; and the unfortunate tenant is anxious to stick to it as long as he can. A good many, however, are giving it up, and preparing for America; and these are the substantial farmers who have still a little means left."

"A gentleman travelling from Borris-in-Ossory to Kilkenny, one bright spring morning, counts at both sides of the road, in a distance of twenty-four miles, 'nine men and four ploughs' occupied in the fields; but sees multitudes of wan labourers, 'beyond the power of computation by a mail-car passenger,' labouring to destroy the road he was travelling upon. It was a 'public work.'"—*Dublin Evening Mail*.

In the same month of March, "the land," says the *Mayo Constitution*, "is one vast waste: a soul is not to be seen working on the holdings of the poor farmers throughout the country, and those who have had the prudence to plough or dig the ground, are *in fear* of throwing in the seed."

When the new "Out-door Relief Act" began to be applied, with its memorable quarter-acre clause, all this process went on with wonderful velocity, and millions of people were soon left landless and homeless. That they should be left landless and homeless was strictly in accordance with British policy; but then there was danger of the millions of outcasts becoming robbers and murderers. Accordingly, the next point was to clear the country of them, and diminish the poor rates, by *emigration*.

For, though they were perishing fast of hunger and typhus, they were not perishing fast enough. It was inculcated by the English press that the temperament and

disposition of the Irish people fitted them peculiarly for some remote country in the East, or in the West—in fact, for any country but their own—that Providence had committed some mistake in causing them to be born in Ireland. As usual, the *Times* was foremost in finding out this singular freak of nature. Says the *Times* (February 22, 1847):—

"Remove Irishmen to the banks of the Ganges or the Indus—to Delhi, Benares, or Trincomalee—and they would be far more in their element there than *in a country to which an inexorable fate has confined them*."

Again, a Mr. Murray, a Scotch banker, writes a pamphlet upon the proper measures for Ireland. "The surplus population of Ireland," says Mr. Murray, "have been trained *precisely* for those pursuits which the unoccupied regions of North America require." Which might appear strange—a population expressly trained, and that *precisely*, to suit any country except their own!

But these are comparatively private and individual suggestions. In April of this year, however, six peers and twelve commoners, who call themselves Irish, but who include among them such "Irishmen" as Dr. Whately and Mr. Godley, laid a scheme before Lord John Russell, for the transportation of one million and a half of Irishmen to Canada, at a cost of nine millions sterling, to be charged on "Irish property," and to be paid by an income-tax.

Again, within the same year, a few months later, a "Select Committee" (and a very select one) of the House of Lords brings up a report "On Colonization from Ireland." Their lordships report that all former committees on the state of Ireland (with one exception) had agreed, at least on this point, that it was necessary to remove the "excess of labour." They say:—

"They have taken evidence respecting the state of Ireland, of the British North American Colonies (including Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland), the West India Islands, New South Wales, Port Philip, South Australia, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand. On some of these points it will be found that their inquiries have little more than commenced; on others, that those inquiries have been carried somewhat nearer to completion; but in no case can it be considered that the subject is yet exhausted. . . .

The committee are fully aware that they have as yet examined into many points but superficially, and that some—as, for example, the state of the British posses-



sions in *Southern Africa*, and in the *Territory of Natal*—have not yet been considered at all. Neither have they obtained adequate information respecting what we sincerely hope may hereafter be considered as the prospering settlement of *New Zealand*. The important discoveries of Sir T. Mitchell in Australia have also been but slightly noticed."

It appears that any inquiry into the state of Ireland naturally called their lordships to a consideration distant of latitudes and longitudes.

Their lordships further declare that the emigration which they recommend must be "voluntary"—and, also, that "there was a deep and pervading anxiety for emigration exhibited by the people themselves."

A deep and pervading anxiety to fly—to escape any whither! From whom? Men pursued by wild beasts will show a pervading anxiety to go *anywhere* out of reach. If a country be made too hot to hold its inhabitants, they will be willing even to throw themselves into the sea.

All this while, that there were from four to five millions of acres of improvable waste lands in Ireland—and even from the land in cultivation Ireland was exporting food enough every year to sustain eight millions of people in England.

None of the vast public schemes of emigration was adopted by Parliament in its full extent; though aid was, from time to time, given to minor projects for that end; and landlords continued very busy all this year and the next, shipping all their "surplus tenantry" by their own private resources, thinking it cheaper than to maintain them by rates. The Poor law guardians, also, were authorized to transport paupers, and to appropriate part of the rates to that purpose.

There has now been laid before the reader a complete sketch, at least in outline, of the British famine policy—expectation of Government spoon-feeding at the point of police bayonets—shaking the farmers loose from their lands, employing them for a time on strictly public useless works, then disgorging them in crowds of one hundred thousand at a time, to beg, or rob, or perish—then "out-door relief," administered in quantities altogether infinitesimal in proportion to the need—then that universal ejection, the quarter-acre law—then the corruption of the middle class by holding out the prize of ten thousand new Government situations—then the Vagrancy Act, to make criminals of all houseless wanderers—then the

"voluntary" emigration schemes—then the omnipresent police, hanging like a cloud over the houses of all "suspected persons"—that is, all persons who still kept a house over their heads—then the quarantine regulations, and increased fare for *deck* passengers to England, thus debarring the doomed race from all escape at that side, and leaving them the sole alternative—America or the grave. This gives something like a map or plan of the field as laid out and surveyed for the final conquest of the island.

The Irish landlords were now in dire perplexity. Many of them were good and just men; but the vast majority were fully identified in interest with the British Government, and desired nothing so much as to destroy the population. They would not consent to tenant-right; they dared not trust themselves in Ireland without a British army. They may have felt, indeed, that they were themselves both injured and insulted by the whole system of English legislation; but they would submit to anything rather than fraternize with the injured Catholic Celts. A few landlords and other gentlemen met and formed an "Irish Council;" but these were soon frightened into private life again by certain revolutionary proposals of some members, and especially by the very name of tenant-right. At last, about the end of this year, seeing that *another* season's famine was approaching, and knowing that violent counsels began to prevail amongst the extreme section of the national party, the landlords, in guilty and cowardly rage and fear, called on Parliament for a new Coercion Act.

From this moment all hope that the landed gentry would stand on the side of Ireland against England utterly vanished. This deadly alliance between the landlords and the Government brought Irish affairs to a crisis, broke up the "Irish Confederation," (composed of the extreme nationalists, who could no longer exist in the Repeal Association), and provoked an attempt at insurrection.

Before going further, however, three facts should be mentioned: *First*, That by a careful census of the agricultural produce of Ireland for this year, 1847, made by Captain Larcom, as a Government Commissioner, the total value of that produce was £44,958,120 sterling; which would have amply sustained *double* the entire people of the island.\* This return is given in detail, and agrees generally with another estimate of the same, prepared by

\* In Thom's *Official Almanac and Directory*, the Government has taken care to suppress the statement of gross amount.



John Martin, of Loughorn, in the County Down—a gentleman whose name will be mentioned again in this narrative. *Second*, That at least five hundred thousand human beings perished this year of famine, and of famine-typhus;\* and two hundred thousand more fled beyond the sea to escape famine and fever. *Third*, That the loans for relief given to the Public Works and Public Commissariat Departments to be laid out as they should think proper, and to be repaid by rates on Irish property, went in the first place to maintain ten thousand greedy officials; and that the greater part of these funds never reached the people at all, or reached them in such a way as to ruin and exterminate them.

A kind of sacred wrath took possession of a few Irishmen at this period. They could endure the horrible scene no longer, and resolved to cross the path of the British car of conquest, though it should crush them to atoms.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1847—1848.

Lord Clarendon Viceroy—His Means of Insuring the Shipment to England of the Usual Tribute—Bribes the Baser Sort of Editors—Patronage for Catholic Lawyers—Another Coercion Act—Projects for Stopping Export of Grain—Arming—Alarm of Government—Whigs Active in Coercion—French Revolution of February—Confederate Clubs—Deputation from Dublin to Paris—O'Brien's Last Appearance in Parliament—Trials of O'Brien and Meagher—Trial of Mitchell—Packing of the Jury—Reign of Terror in Dublin.

the summer of this year, 1847, Lord Clarendon was sent over as Lord-Lieutenant to finish the conquest of Ireland—just as Lord Mountjoy had been sent to bring to an end the wars of Queen Elizabeth's reign; and by the same means substantially—that is, by corruption of the rich and starvation of the poor. The form of procedure, indeed, was somewhat different; for English statesmen of the sixteenth century had not learned to use the weapons of “amelioration” and “political economy;” neither had they yet established the policy of keeping Ireland as a store-farm to raise wealth for England. Lord Mountjoy's system, then, had somewhat of a rude character; and he could think of nothing better than sending large bodies of troops to cut down

\* The deaths by famine of the year before, we may set down at three hundred thousand. There is no possibility of ascertaining the numbers: and when the Government Commissioners pretend to do so, they intend deception.

the green corn, and burn the houses. In one expedition into Leinster, his biographer, Moryson, estimates that he destroyed “ten thousand pounds worth of corn,” that is, wheat; an amount which might now be stated at £200,000 worth. In O'Cahan's country, in Ulster, as the same Moryson tells us, after a *razzia* of Mountjoy: “We have none left to give us opposition, nor of late have seen any but dead carcasses, merely starved for want of meat.” So that Mountjoy could boast he had given Ireland to Elizabeth “nothing but carcasses and ashes.”

Lord Clarendon's method was more in the spirit of the nineteenth century, though his slaughters were more terrible in the end than Mountjoy's. Again there was growing upon Irish soil a noble harvest; but it had been more economical to carry it over to England by help of free trade than to burn it on the ground. The problem then was, as it had been the last year, and the year before, how to insure its speedy and peaceful transmission. Accordingly, Lord Clarendon came over with conciliatory speeches, and large professions of the desire of “Government” now, at last, to stay the famine. Sullen murmurs had been heard, and even open threats and urgent recommendations that the Irish harvest must not be suffered to go another year; and there were rumours of risings in the harvest to break up the roads, to pull down the bridges, in every way to stop the tracks of this fatal “commerce;” rumours, in short, of an insurrection. Some new method, then, had to be adopted, to turn the thoughts and hopes of that too credulous people once more towards the “Government.” Lord Clarendon recommended a tour of agricultural “lectures,” the expense to be provided for by the Royal Agricultural Society, aided by public money. The lecturers were to go upon every estate, call the people together, talk to them of the benevolent intentions of his Excellency, and give them good advice.

The poor people listened respectfully, but usually told the lecturers that there was no use in following that excellent agricultural advice, as they were all going to be *turned out* the next spring. These lecturers published their report—a most amazing picture of patient suffering on the one hand, and of official insolence on the other. One Fitzgerald, a most energetic lecturer, full of Liebig's *Agricultural Chemistry*, tells us: “They all agreed that what I said was just; but they always had *some excuse*, that they could not get seed, or had nothing to live on in the meantime.”



And a Mr. Goode, who was also instructing the West, says:—

“The poor people here appeared to be in a most desponding state: they always met me with the argument that there was no use in their working there, for they were going to be turned out in spring, and would have their houses pulled down over them. I used to tell them that I had nothing to do with that; that I was sent among them by some kind, intelligent gentlemen, barely to tell them *what course to pursue*.”

That was all. Lord Clarendon had not sent down Mr. Goode to lecture on *tenant-right*; and the people had no business to obtrude their Jacobin principles upon a Government “instructor.” They might as well have prated to him about repeal of the Union.

Another measure of Lord Clarendon was to buy support at the press with secret-service money. To the honour of the Dublin press, this was a somewhat difficult matter. The Government had, at that time, only one leading journal in the metropolis on which it could surely rely—the *Evening Post*. Lord Clarendon wanted another organ, and of lower species; for he had work to do which the comparatively respectable *Post* might shrink from. He sought out a creature named Birch, editor of the *World*, a paper which was never named nor alluded to by any reputable journal in the city. This Birch lived by *hush-money*, or black-mail of the most infamous kind—that is, extorting money from private persons, men and women, by threats of inventing and publishing scandalous stories of their domestic circles. He had been tried more than once and convicted of this species of swindling. “I then offered him £100, if I remember rightly,” says Lord Clarendon,\* “for it did not make any great impression on me at the time. He said that would not be sufficient for his purpose, and I think it was then extended to about £350.” On further examination, his lordship confessed that he had paid Birch “further sums”—in short, kept him regularly in pay; and, finally, on Birch bringing suit against him for the balance due for “work and labour,” had paid him in one sum £2000, at the same time taking up all the papers and letters (as he thought) which might bring the transaction to light. Everybody can guess the nature of Birch’s work and labour, and *quantum meruit*. His duty was to make weekly attacks of a private and revolting nature upon Smith O’Brien, upon Mr. Meagher, upon Mr.

Mitchel, and every one else who was prominent in resisting and exposing the Government measures. Further, the public money was employed in the gratuitous distribution of the *World*; for, otherwise, decent persons would never have seen it.

It was long afterwards that the public learned how all this subterranean agency had come to light, on the trial of one of the suits which Birch was forced to institute for recovery of his wages.

A third measure of the Viceroy was—extreme liberality towards Catholic lawyers and gentlemen in the distribution of patronage; that so they might be the more effectually bought off from all common interest and sympathy with the “lower orders,” and might stand patiently by and see their people slain or banished. Amongst others, Mr. Monahan, an industrious and successful Catholic barrister, was made Attorney-General for Ireland, from which the next step was to the bench. Mr. Monahan became a grateful and useful servant to the enemies of his country.

The summer of ’47 had worn through wearily and hopelessly. All endeavours to rouse the landlord class to exertion entirely failed, through their coward fear of an outraged and plundered people; and, at last, when out of the vast multitudes of men thrown from public works, houseless and famishing, a few committed murders and robberies, or shot a bailiff or an incoming tenant, the landlords in several counties besought for a new Coercion and Arms Act, so as to make that code more stringent and inevitable. Lord John Russell was but too happy to comply with the demand; but the landlords were to give something in exchange for this security.

Addresses of confidence were voted by Grand Juries and county meetings of landlords. The Irish gentry almost unanimously volunteered addresses denouncing repeal and repealers, and pledging themselves to maintain the Union. At the same time ejection was more active than ever; and it is not to be denied that, amongst the myriads of desperate men who then wandered houseless, there were some who would not die tamely. Before taking their last look at the sun, they could, at least, lie in wait for the agent who had pulled down their houses and turned their weeping children adrift; him, at least, they could send to perdition before them.

The crisis was come. The people no longer trusted the ameliorative professions of their enemies; and there were some who zealously strove to rouse them now, at last, to stand up for their own lives, to keep

\* See evidence on the trial Birch against Sir T. Redington.



the harvest of '47 within the four seas of Ireland, and by this one blow to prostrate Irish landlordism and the British empire along with it.

This was a perilous, and, perhaps, an utterly desperate enterprise, while England was at peace with all the world, and at full liberty to hurl the whole mass of her military power upon a small island which she already held with so firm a grasp. Even those who counselled armed resistance were fully conscious of the desperation of that course, but honestly thought that any death—especially death in just war—was better than the death of a dog, by hunger.

In the meantime, the beautiful metropolis of Ireland was extremely gay and brilliant. After two years' frightful famine—and when it was already apparent that the *next* famine, of 1847-48, would be even more desolating—you may imagine that Dublin city would show some effect or symptom of such a national calamity. Singular to relate, that city had never before been so gay and luxurious; splendid equipages had never before so crowded the streets; and the theatres and concert-rooms had never been filled with such brilliant throngs. In truth, the rural gentry resorted in greater numbers to the metropolis at this time: some to avoid the sight and sound of the misery which surrounded their country seats, and which British laws almost expressly enacted they should *not* relieve; some to get out of reach of an exasperated and houseless peasantry. Any stranger arriving in those days, guided by judicious friends only through fashionable streets and squares, introduced only to proper circles, would have said that Dublin must be the prosperous capital of some wealthy and happy country.

The new Poor law was now on all hands admitted to be a failure—that is, a failure as to its ostensible purpose. For its real purpose—reducing the body of the people to “able-bodied pauperism”—it had been no failure at all, but a complete success. Nearly ten millions sterling had now been expended under the several Relief Acts—expended mostly in salaries to officials; the rest laid out in useless work, or in providing rations, for a short time, to induce small farmers to give up their land, which was the condition of such relief. Instead of ten millions in three years, if twenty millions had been advanced in the first year, and expended on useful labour (that being the sum which had been devoted promptly to turning wild the West India negroes), the whole famine slaughter might have been averted, and the whole advance

would have been easily repaid to the Treasury.\*

Long before the Government Commissioners had proclaimed their law a failure, the writers in the *Nation* had been endeavouring to turn the minds of the people towards the only real remedy for all their evils—that is, a combined movement to prevent the export of provisions, and to resist process of ejectment. This involved a denial of rent and refusal of rates; involved, in other words, a root-and-branch revolution, socially and politically.

Such revolutionary ideas could only be justified by a desperate necessity, and by the unnatural and fatal sort of connection between Irish landlords and Irish tenants. The peasantry of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland, stand in three several relations towards the lords of their soil. In England they are simply the emancipated serfs and *villeins* of the feudal system; never knew any other form of social polity, nor any other lords of the soil, since the Norman conquest. As England, however, prosecuted her conquests by degrees in the other two kingdoms, she found the free Celtic system of clanship; and as rebellion after rebellion was crushed, her statesmen insisted upon regarding the chiefs of clans as feudal lords, and their clansmen as their vassals or tenants. In Scotland the chiefs gladly assented to this view of the case, and the MacCallum More became, nothing loath, Duke of Argyle, and owner of the territory which had been the tribe lands of his clan. Owing mainly to the fact that estates in Scotland were not so tempting a prey as the rich tracts of Ireland, and partly owing also to the Scottish people having generally become Protestants on the change of religion, there was but little change in the ruling families; and the Scottish clansmen, now become “tenantry,” paid their duties to the heads of their own kindred as before. So it has happened that to this day there is no alienation of feeling or distinction of race to exasperate the lot of the poor cultivators of the soil.

In Ireland, wherever the chiefs turned Protestant, and chose to accept “grants” of their tribe lands at the hands of British kings (as the De Burghs and O'Briens), much the same state of things took place for a while. But Ireland never submitted to English dominion as Scotland has done;

\* Of the £10,000,000 advanced by the Treasury, three millions had been repaid by rates in 1854. What may have been refunded since, it is not easy to learn with any accuracy. The accounts between Ireland and the Imperial Treasury are kept in England.



and there were continual "rebellions" (so the English termed our national resistance), followed by extensive confiscations. Many hundreds of great estates in Ireland have thus been confiscated twice and three times; and the new proprietors were Englishmen, and, in a portion of Ulster, Scotchmen. These, of course, had no common interest or sympathy with the people, whom they considered and called "the Irish enemy." Still, while Ireland had her own Parliament, and the landlords resided at home, the state of affairs was tolerable; but when the Act of "Union," in 1800, concentrated the pride and splendour of the empire at London, and made England the great field of ambition and distinction, most of our grandees resided out of Ireland, kept agents and bailiffs there, wrung the utmost farthing out of the defenceless people, and spent it elsewhere.

Now, it never would have entered the mind of any rational or just man, at this late date, to call in question the title to long ago confiscated estates; nor, supposing those titles proved bad, would it have been possible to find the right owners. But when the system was found to work so fatally—when hundreds of thousands of people were lying down and perishing in the midst of abundance, and superabundance, which their own hands had created—society itself stood dissolved. That form of society was not only a failure, but an intolerable oppression, and cried aloud to be cut up by the roots and swept away.

Those who thought thus, had reconciled their minds to the needful means—that is, a revolution as fundamental as the French revolution, and to the wars and horrors incident to that. The horrors of war, they knew, were by no means so terrible as the horrors of peace which their own eyes had seen; they were ashamed to see their kinsmen patiently submitting to be starved to death, and longed to see blood flow, if it were only to show that blood still flowed in Irish veins.

The enemy began to take genuine alarm at these violent doctrines—especially as they found that the people were taking them to heart; and already, in Clare County, mobs were stopping the transport of grain towards the seaports. If rents should cease to be levied, it was clear that not only would England lose her five millions sterling *per annum* of absentee rents, but mortgagees, fundholders, insurance companies, and the like, would lose dividends, interests, bonus, and profits. There was then in England a gentleman who was in the habit of writing able but

sanguinary exhortations to ministers, with the signature "S. G. O." His addresses appeared in the *Times*, and were believed to influence considerably the counsels of Government. In November, 1847, this "S. G. O." raised the alarm, and called for prompt coercion in Ireland. Here is one sentence from a letter of his reverence—for "S. G. O." was a clergyman:—

"Lord John may safely believe me when I say that the prosperity, nay, almost the very existence of many insurance societies, the positive salvation from utter ruin of many, very many mortgagees, depends on some instant steps to make life ordinarily secure in Ireland; of course, I only mean life in that class of it in which individuals effect insurances and give mortgages."

In short, his reverence meant high life. Lord Clarendon, as Parliament was not then sitting, issued an admonitory address, wherein he announced that—

"The constabulary will be increased in all disturbed districts (whereby an additional burden will be thrown upon the rates), military detachments will be stationed wherever necessary, and efficient patrols maintained; liberal rewards will be given for information," &c.

In the meantime, large forces were concentrated at points where the spirit of resistance showed itself; for a sample of which we take a paragraph from the *Tipperary Free Press*:—

"A large military force, under the civil authority, has seized upon the produce of such farms in Boytonrath as owed rent and arrears to the late landlord, Mr. Roe, and the same will be removed to Dublin, and sold there, if not redeemed within fourteen days. There are two hundred soldiers and their officers garrisoned in the mansion house at Rockwell."

Whereupon, the *Nation* urged the people to begin calculating whether ten times the whole British army would be enough to act as bailiffs and drivers everywhere at once; or, whether, if they did, the proceeds of the distress might answer expectation. In fact, it was obvious that if the enemy should be forced to employ their forces in this way over the island—to lift and carry the whole harvests of Ireland, and that over roads broken up and bridges broken down to obstruct them, and with the daily risk of meeting bands of able-bodied paupers to dispute their passage—the service would soon have been wholly demoralized, and after three months of such employment, the remnant of the army might have been destroyed.

Parliament was called hastily together. Her Majesty told the Houses that there



were atrocious crimes in Ireland—a spirit of insubordination, an organized resistance to “legal rights;” and, of course, that she required “additional power” for the protection of life—that is, high life.

The meaning of this was a new Coercion bill. It was carried without delay, and with unusual unanimity; and it is instructive here to note the difference between a Whig in power and a Whig out. When Sir Robert Peel had proposed his Coercion bill *the year before*, it had been vehemently opposed by Lord John Russell and Lord Grey. It was time to have done with coercion, they had said; Ireland had been “misgoverned:” there had been too many Arms Acts; it was “justice” that was wanted now; and they, the Whigs, were the men to dispense it. Earl Grey, speaking of the *last* Coercion bill (it was brought in by the other party), said, emphatically (*see debate in the Lords, March 23, 1846*), “that measures of severity had been tried long enough;” and repeated with abhorrence the list of coercive measures passed since 1800, all without effect; how, in 1800, the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, the Act for the Suppression of the Rebellion being still in force; how coercion was renewed in 1801; continued again in 1804; how the Insurrection Act was passed in 1807, which gave the Lord-Lieutenant full and legal power to place any district under martial law, to suspend trial by jury, and make it a transportable offence to be out of doors from sunset to sunrise; how this Act remained in force till 1810; how it was renewed in 1814—continued in ’15, ’16, ’17—revived in ’22, and continued through ’23, ’24, and ’25; how another Insurrection Act was needed in 1833, was renewed in ’34, and expired but five years ago. “And again,” continued this Whig, “again in 1846, we are called on to renew it!” Horrible!—revolting to a Liberal out of place! “We must look further,” continued Earl Grey—vociferating from the opposition bench—“we must look to the root of the evil; the state of law and the habits of the people, *in respect to the occupation of land*, are almost at the roots of the disorder;—it was undeniable that the *clearance system* prevailed to a great extent in Ireland; and that such things could take place, he cared not how large a population might be suffered to grow up in a particular district, was *a disgrace to a civilized country*.”

And Lord John Russell in the Commons had said, on the same occasion: “If they were to deal with the question of the crimes, they were bound to consider also

whether there were not measures that might be introduced which would reach *the causes of those crimes*”—and he horrified the House by an account he gave them of “a whole village, containing two hundred and seventy persons, razed to the ground, and the entire of that large number of individuals sent adrift on the highroad, to sleep under the hedges, without even being permitted the privilege of boiling their potatoes, or obtaining shelter among the walls of the houses.” Disgusting!—to a Whig statesman in opposition!

Now, these very same men had had the entire control and government of Ireland for a year and a half. Not a single measure had been proposed by them in that time to reach “the cause of those crimes;” not a single security had been given “in respect of the occupation of land;” not one check to that terrible “clearance system,” which was “a disgrace to a civilized country.” On the contrary, every measure was carefully calculated to accelerate the clearance system; and the Government had helped that system ruthlessly by the employment of their troops and police. They had literally swept the people off the land by myriads upon myriads; and now, when their Relief Acts were admittedly a *failure*, and when multitudes of homeless peasants, transformed into paupers, were at length making the landed men, and mortgagees, and Jews, and insurance officers, tremble for their gains—the Liberal Whig Ministry had nothing to propose but more jails, more handcuffs, more transportation.

The new Coercion bill was in every respect like the rest of the series; in Ireland, these bills are all as much like one another as one policeman’s carabine is like another. Disturbed districts were to be proclaimed by the Lord-Lieutenant. He might proclaim a whole county, or the whole thirty-two counties. Once proclaimed, everybody in that district was to be within doors (whether he had a house or not) from dusk till morning. Any one found not at home, to be arrested and transported. If arms were found about any man’s premises, and he could not *prove* that they were put there without his knowledge—arrest, imprisonment, and transportation. All the arms in the district to be brought in on proclamation to that effect, and piled in the police offices. Lord-Lieutenant to quarter on the district as many additional police, inspectors, detectives, and sub-inspectors, as he might think fit; offer such rewards to informers as he might think fit; and charge all the expense upon the tenantry, to be levied by rates—*no part* of these rates to be



charged to the landlords—constabulary to collect them at the point of the bayonet; and these rates to be in addition to poor rates, cess, tithe (*rent charge*), rent, and imperial taxes.

The passage of the Coercion bill at the instance of the landlords, and the break-up of the Irish Confederation, occasioned the establishment of the *United Irishman*, an avowed organ of insurrection. Events for a time moved rapidly. Soon there burst in upon us news of the February revolution in Paris, and the flight of King Louis Philippe, for between the French people and the Irish there has always been an electric telegraph whose signals never fail; and British statesmen had not forgotten that it was the first great French revolution which cost them the war of '98. The February revolution, also, at once obliterated the feuds of the Irish Confederation. Nobody would now be listened to there who proposed any other mode of redress for Irish grievances than the sword. A resolution was brought up, with the sanction of the committee, and passed with enthusiastic acclamation, that the confederate clubs should become armed and officered, so that each man should know his right-hand and his left-hand comrade, and the man whose word he should obey. All the second-rate cities, as well as Dublin, and all the country towns, were now full of clubs, which assumed military and revolutionary names—the “Sarsfield Club,” the “Emmet Club,” and so forth; and the business of arming proceeded with commendable activity. Such young men as could afford it, provided themselves with rifles and bayonets; those who had not the means for this, got pike-heads made, and there was much request for ash poles. What was still more alarming to the enemy, the soldiers in several garrisons were giving unmistakable symptoms of sharing in the general excitement; not Irish soldiers alone, but English and Scottish, who had Chartist ideas. A large part of the circulation of the *United Irishman*, in spite of all the exertions of the officers, was in military barracks.

Undoubtedly it behoved the British Government, if it intended to hold Ireland, to adopt some energetic measures; and, as it certainly did so intend, these measures were not wanting.

New regiments were poured into Ireland of course, and Dublin held an army of ten thousand men—infantry; cavalry, artillery, and engineers. The barrack accommodations being insufficient, many large buildings were taken as temporary barracks; the deserted palaces of the Irish

aristocracy—as Aldborough House on the north-east—the deserted halls of manufactures and trade in the “Liberty,” and the Linen Hall, were occupied by detachments. The Bank of Ireland—our old Parliament House—had cannon mounted over the entablatures of its stately Ionic colonnades; and the vast and splendid Custom House, not being now needed for trade (our imports being all from the “sister country,” and our exports all to the same), was quite commodious as a barrack and arsenal. The quiet quadrangles of Trinity College were the scene of daily parades, and the loyal Board of that institution gave up the wing which commands Westmoreland Street, College Street, and Dame Street, to be occupied by troops. Superb squadrons of hussars, of lancers, and of dragoons, rode continually through and around the city; infantry practised platoon firing in the squares; heavy guns, strongly guarded, were for ever rolling along the pavement; and parties of horse artillery showed all mankind how quickly and dexterously they could wheel and aim, and load and fire, at the crossings of the streets. These military demonstrations, and the courts of “Law,” constituted the open and avowed powers and agencies of the Government.

But there was a secret and subterranean machinery. The editor of the *World* was now on full pay, and on terms of close intimacy at the Castle and Viceregal Lodge. His paper was gratuitously furnished to all hotels and public-houses by means of secret service money. Dublin swarmed with detectives. They went at night to get their instructions at the Castle from Colonel Brown, head of the police department; and it was one of their regular duties to gain admittance to the clubs of the Confederation, where it afterwards appeared that they had been the most daring counsellors of treason and riot.

Frankly, and at once, the Confederation accepted the only policy thereafter possible, and acknowledged the meaning of the European revolutions. On the 15th of March, O'Brien moved an address of congratulation to the victorious French people; and ended his speech with these words:—

“It would be recollected that a short time ago he thought it his duty to deprecate all attempts to turn the attention of the people to military affairs, because it seemed to him that, in the then condition of the country, the only effect of leading the people's mind to what was called ‘a guerrilla warfare,’ would be to encourage



some of the misguided peasantry to the commission of murder. Therefore it was that he declared he should not be a party to giving such a recommendation. But the state of affairs was totally different now; and he had no hesitation in declaring that he thought the minds of intelligent young men should be turned to the consideration of such questions as, how strong places can be captured, and weak ones defended—how supplies of food and ammunition can be cut off from an enemy—and how they can be secured to a friendly force. The time was also come when every lover of his country should come forward openly, and proclaim his willingness to be enrolled as a member of a national guard. No man, however, should tender his name as a member of that national guard unless he was prepared to do two things: one, to preserve the State from anarchy; the other, to be ready to die for the defence of his country."

Two days after this meeting was Saint Patrick's Day. A meeting of the citizens of Dublin was announced for that anniversary, to adopt an address, from Dublin to Paris, but was adjourned for two or three days to allow time for negotiations to unite all repealers of the two parties in the demonstration. Lord Clarendon, doubtless under the advice of his Privy-Councillor of the *World*, thought it would be a good opportunity to strike terror by a military display. He pretended to apprehend that Saint Patrick's Day would be selected for the first day of Dublin barricades; and the troops were kept under arms—the cavalry, with horses ready saddled in all the barracks, waiting for the moment to crush the first movement in the blood of our citizens.

The meeting was adjourned; but there was no intention of abandoning it. O'Brien had offered, even in case of a *Proclamation* forbidding it, to attend and take the chair; and what he promised, the enemy well knew he would perform.

The meeting was held without interruption; but it was well known that the public buildings, and some private houses, were filled with detachments under arms. These addresses, both from the Confederation and from the city, were to be presented in Paris to the President of the Provisional Government, M. de Lamartine; and O'Brien, Meagher, and an intelligent tradesman, of high character and independence of mind, named Hollywood, were appointed a deputation to Paris.

All this, it was evident, could not go on long. The clubs were, in the meantime, rapidly arming themselves with rifles; and blacksmiths' forges were prolific of

pike-heads. The Confederates hoped, and the Government feared, that no armed collision would be made necessary until September, when the harvest would be all cut, and when the commissariat of the people's war, the cause of the war, and the prize of the war, would be all bound up in a sheaf together. But the foe to be dealt with was no weak fool. The Government understood these views thoroughly, and resolved to precipitate the issue somehow or other. One morning, after that meeting of Dublin citizens, three men, Smith O'Brien, Mr. Meagher, and Mr. Mitchel, were waited on by a police-magistrate, and requested to give bail that they would stand their trial on a charge of sedition. The ground of prosecution in the two former cases was the language held at the meeting of the Irish Confederation (quoted above in part). In the third case, there were two distinct indictments, for two articles in the *United Irishman*.

Before the trials, O'Brien and Meagher went to France and presented their address to the Provisional Government.\*

On their return, O'Brien walked into the British Parliament, and found that august body engaged in discussing a new bill "for the further security of Her Majesty's Crown." Ministers, in fact, had determined to meet the difficulty by a new "law," the Treason-felony law, by which the writing and printing, or open and advised speaking, of incitements to insurrection in Ireland, should be deemed "felony," punishable by transportation. The bill was introduced by the Whigs, and was warmly supported by the Tories; Sir Robert Peel declaring that what Ireland needed was to make her national aspirations not only a crime, but an ignominious crime; so as to put this species of offence on a footing with arson, or forgery, or waylaying with intent to murder. O'Brien rose to address the House, and never, since first Parliament met in Westminster, was heard such a chorus of frantic and obscene outcries.

He persisted, however, and made himself

\* These were mere addresses of congratulation and of sympathy. De Lamartine made a highly poetic, but rather unmeaning reply to them. He has since, in his history, violently misrepresented them; being, in fact, a mere Anglo-Frenchman. Mr. O'Brien has already convicted him of these misrepresentations. We content ourselves here with pronouncing the two following sentences poetic fictions: "Les Irlandais, unis aux chartistes Anglais, se précipitaient sur le continent et cherchaient des complicités insurrectionnelles en France, à la fois parmi les demagogues au nom de la liberté, et parmi les chefs du parti Catholique au nom du Catholicisme." And again: "L'Angleterre n'attendait pas avec moins de sollicitude la réception que ferait Lamartine aux insurgés Irlandais, partis de Dublin pour venir demander des encouragements et des armes à la République française."



heard; and those to whom the name and fame of that good Irishman are dear, will always remember with pride that his last utterance in the London Parliament was one of haughty defiance, in the name of his oppressed and plundered country. He avowed that he had advised his countrymen to arm, and fight for their right to live upon their own soil; and he added, amidst the horrible yells of the House:—

“I conceive that it is the peculiar duty of the Irish people to obtain the possession of arms at a time when you tell them you are prepared to crush their expression of opinion, not by argument, but by brute force.”

The bill was passed into “law” by immense majorities; and, thereafter, an Irish repealer of the Union was to be a “felon.” O’Brien returned to Dublin.

The deputies were received by a multitudinous and enthusiastic meeting in the Dublin Music Hall, and Meagher presented to the citizens of Dublin, with glowing words, a magnificent flag, the Irish tricolor, of green, white, and orange, surmounted by a pike head.

The trials came on. They were to be before special juries, struck by the process before described. O’Brien and Meagher were first tried, and as their “sedition” had been so open and avowed—and as the Whig ministers were extremely reluctant to pack juries *if they could help it*—the Crown officers left on each of the two juries *one* repealer. It was enough. A true repealer knew that no Irishman *could* commit any offence against a foreign Queen; and in each case the one repealer stood out, refused to convict, though he should be starved to death; and the traversers, amidst cheering multitudes, were escorted triumphantly from the four courts to the Confederate Committee Rooms, where they addressed the people, and promised to repeat and improve upon all their seditions. The excitement of the country was intense. The defeat of the “Government” was celebrated all over the country by bonfires and illuminations, and the clubs became more diligent in arming themselves; but Mr. Monahan, the Attorney-General, foamed and raged.

Next came the two trials of Mr. Mitchel; and it was very evident to the Government that there must be no possibility of mistake or miscarriage here. The time, indeed, was become exceedingly dangerous, and the people rapidly rising into that state of high excitement in which ordinary motives and calculations fail, and a single act of desperation may precipitate a revolution. As usual in such

cases, the British Government had recourse to brutality, in order to strike terror. Police magistrates were ordered to arrest parties of young men practising at targets in the neighbourhood of country towns, and march them in custody through the streets. Men in Dublin were seized upon and dragged to jail on the charge of saying “halt” to the clubmen marching to a public meeting—it was “training in military evolutions,” under the Act; and one young man was actually brought to trial, and transported for seven years, on an indictment charging him, for that he had, in a private room in Dublin, said to thirteen other young men, then and there ranged in line, these fatal words, “Right shoulders forward,” contrary to the peace of our lady the Queen, and so forth.

On the two juries being struck for the trial of Mr. Mitchel, it was at once evident that upon each of them would be one or two men who desired the independence of their country; and, perhaps, one or two others of whom the Castle could not be perfectly sure. But, as the new “Treason-felony” Act had now become law, the Government suddenly abandoned the two prosecutions already commenced, and arrested Mr. Mitchel on a charge of treason under the new Act.

On this occasion it was determined to proceed, not by a special, but by a common jury; which latter method, as was supposed, gave the sheriff more clear and unquestioned power of fraudulently packing the jury. For the jury was to be closely packed, of course. Lord John Russell and Mr. Macaulay, who had been in opposition in 1844, and who had then so earnestly denounced the packing of juries in Ireland, were now in office; were responsible for the Government of the country, and understood perfectly that upon the careful packing of this jury depended the Queen’s Government in Ireland. The judges had already appointed the day for holding the commission to try cases in Dublin; and the sheriff had summoned his select hundred and fifty jurors to try the cases; but after the arrest of this new prisoner, and when the sheriff knew that important business was to be done, he altered his list, and summoned a new set, so that all was ready for the trial.

In the meantime Lord Clarendon was busily getting up, through the Grand Masters of the Orangemen, loyal addresses, and declarations against “rebels” and “traitors.” In fact, the Orange farmers and burghers of the North were fast becoming diligent students of the *United*



*Irishman*, and although they and their order had been treated with some neglect of late both by England and by the Irish aristocracy, they were now taken into high favour, and arms were very secretly issued to some of their lodges from Dublin Castle.\*

But this needed prudence; for Protestant Repeal Associations had been formed in Dublin, in Drogheda, and even in Lurgan, a great centre of Orangeism. To counteract the progress we had made in this direction, the aristocracy and the clergy were incessant in their efforts, and the Protestants were assured that if Ireland should throw off the dominion of Queen Victoria, we would all instantly become vassals to the woman who sitteth upon seven hills.

The Viceroy, at the same time, took care to frighten the moneyed citizens of Dublin and other towns by placards warning them against the atrocious designs of "Communists" and "Jacobins," whose only object, his lordship intimated, was plunder.†

Whether the Whigs and "Liberals" who then ruled the English councils were really desirous to give a fair trial to their political enemy, or whether they only pretended this desire, or what communications took place on the subject between Downing Street and the Castle, we cannot certainly know; but we find that only two days before this most foul pretence of a trial, Lord John Russell, in answer to questions in the House of Commons, declared that he had written to "his noble friend" (Lord Clarendon) that "he trusted there would not arise any charge of any kind of unfairness as to the composition of the juries; as for his own part, he would rather see those parties acquitted, than that there should be any such unfairness."‡

Lord Clarendon, however, informed him that for this once he could not adhere to the Whig maxims—that a conviction must be had, *per fas et nefas*.

The venerable Robert Robert Holmes, brother-in-law of the Emmets, defended the prisoner; but no defence could avail there.

\* This was quite unknown to the public at the time: one case of it only ever came clearly to light. It was a shipment of five hundred stand of arms to the Belfast Orangemen.

† These placards may be attributed to Lord Clarendon, without scruple. They were printed by the Government printer, and paid for out of our taxes. But it is quite possible that the Viceroy, if charged with these things, would deny them, because they were done through a third party—perhaps Birch. In like manner, he denied all knowledge of the shipment of muskets to the Belfast Orangemen. They were sent, however, from his Castle, and through a subordinate official of his household.

‡ Debate of 23d May.

Of course, he challenged the array of jurors, on the ground of fraud; but the Attorney-General's brother, Stephen Monahan, clerk in the Attorney-General's office, and also one Wheeler, clerk in the Sheriff's office, had been carefully sent out of the city to a distant part of Ireland; and Baron Lefroy was most happy to avail himself of the defect of evidence to give his opinion that the panel was a good and honest panel. The Crown used its privilege of peremptory challenge to the very uttermost; every Catholic, and most Protestants, who answered to their names, were ordered to "stand by." There were thirty-nine challenges, and of these but nineteen were Catholics; all the Catholics who answered to their names were promptly set aside, and twenty other gentlemen, who, although Protestants, were suspected of national feeling—that is to say, the Crown dared not go to trial before the people, Catholic or Protestant. The twelve men finally obtained by this sifting process had amongst them two or three Englishmen; the rest were faithful slaves of the Castle, and all Protestants of the most Orange dye.

Of course, there was a "verdict" of guilty; and a sentence of fourteen years' transportation. The facts charged were easily proved; they were patent, notorious, often repeated, and perfectly deliberate; insomuch, that jurymen who felt themselves to be subjects of the Queen of England, could not do otherwise than convict. On the other hand, any Irish nationalist must acquit. Never before or since have the Government of the foreign enemy and the Irish people met on so plain an issue. Never before was it made so manifest that the enemy's Government maintains its supremacy over Ireland by systematically breaking the "law," even its own law, defiling its temples of justice, and turning the judges of the land into solemn actors in a most immoral kind of play.

An armed steamer waited in the river, on the day of Mr. Mitchel's sentence; the whole garrison of Dublin was under arms, on pretence of a review in the Park; a place was secretly designated for the prisoner's embarkation below the city, where bridges over a canal, and over the entrance to the Custom House docks, could be raised, in order to prevent any concourse of the people in that direction; and, two or three hours after the sentence, Mr. Mitchel was carried off, and never saw his country any more.

The enemy were themselves somewhat surprised at the ease with which they had borne him out of the heart of Dublin,



at noon-day, in chains; and evidently thought they would have but small trouble in crushing any attempt at insurrection afterwards. The confederates waited until "the time" should come; and some of them, indeed, were fully resolved to make an insurrection in the harvest. Yet, as might have been expected, "the time" never came. The individual desperation of Dillon, Meagher, O'Gorman, Leyne, Reilly, could achieve nothing while the people were dispirited both by famine and by long submission to insolent oppression. "When will *the time* come?" exclaimed Martin, "the time about which your orators so boldly vaunt, amid the fierce shouts of your applause? If it come not when one of you, selected by your enemies as your champion, is sent to perish among thieves and murderers, for the crime of loving and defending his native land—then it will never come—never."

During the trial, Dublin was under a complete reign of terror. Reilly was arrested on the charge of saying to men of his club, when turning into their place of meeting, "left wheel." It was a term of military drilling, though the clubmen were without weapons. He was kept in a station-house all night; and bail was refused in the morning. In the course of the day he was fully committed for trial, and bail was taken. During the whole week, the whole large force of the city police had orders to stop all processions, to arrest citizens, on any or no charge; and generally to "strike terror." In the meantime, every day was bringing in more terrible news of the devastation of the famine, and evictions of the tenantry. "On Friday," says the Tipperary *Vindicator* (describing one of these scenes), "the landlord appeared upon the ground, attended by the sheriff and a body of policemen, and commenced the process of ejectment," &c. On that morning, and at that spot, thirty persons were dragged out of their houses, and the houses pulled down. One of the evicted tenants was a widow. "A solvent tenant comes and offers to pay the arrears due by the widow; but a desire on Mr. Scully's part to *consolidate*, prevented the arrangement."

The same week, a writer in the *Cork Examiner*, writing from Skibbereen, says:—

"Our town presents nothing but a moving mass of military and police, conveying to and from the court house crowds of famine culprits. I attended the court for a few hours this day. The dock was crowded with the prisoners, not one

of whom, when called up for trial, was able to support himself in front of the dock. The sentence of the court was received by each prisoner with apparent satisfaction. Even transportation appeared to many to be a relaxation from their sufferings."

On Tuesday, of the same week — it being then well known that the Crown would pack their jury—a meeting of the citizens of Dublin was held at the Royal Exchange, to protest; and Mr. John O'Connell went so far as to move this resolution: "*Resolved*, That we consider the right of trial by a jury as a most sacred inheritance, in the security of person, property, and character." The meeting then proceeded to protest against "the practice of arranging juries to obtain convictions." During the same week the poor houses, hospitals, jails, and many buildings taken temporarily for the purpose, were overflowing with starving wretches; and fevered patients were occupying the same bed with famished corpses;—but on every day of the same week large cargoes of grain and cattle were leaving every port for England. The Orangemen of the North were holding meetings to avow hostility to repealers and to "Jezebel," and eagerly crying "To hell with the Pope!" Thus British policy was in full and successful operation at every point on the day when the Government seized on its first victim, under a new law specially made for his case, and carried him off in fetters under the false pretence of a trial and conviction.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1848—1849.

Reconstitution of the Irish Confederation—New National Journals Established—The *Tribune*—The *Felon*—New Suspension of *Habeas Corpus*—Numerous Arrests—O'Brien Attempts Insurrection—Ballingarry—Arrest and Trial of O'Brien and others—Conquest of the Island—Destruction of the People—Encumbered Estates Act—Its Effects—No Tenant-Right—"Rate-in-Aid"—Queen's Visit to Ireland—Places given to Catholics—Catholic Judges—Their Office and Duty—Ireland "Prosperous"—Statistics of the Famine Slaughter—Destruction of Three Millions of Souls—Flying from "Prosperity."

THE fierce enthusiasm of the Irish Confederates appeared to be redoubled after the removal of the first convicted "felon." They hoped, at least, that if they were restrained from action *then*, it was to some good end, with some sure and well-defined purpose; and, assuredly, there



were many thousands of men then in Ireland who longed and burned for that end and that purpose, to earn an honourable death. How the British system disappointed them, even of an honourable death, remains still to be told. A man may die in Ireland of hunger, or of famine-typus, or of a broken heart; but to die for your country—the death *dulce et decorum*—to die on a fair field fighting for freedom and honour—to die the death even of a defeated soldier, as Hofer died; or so much as to mount the gallows, like Robert Emmet, to pay the penalty of a glorious “treason”—even this was an *euthanasia* which British policy could no longer afford to an Irish nationalist.

Yet with all odds against them—with the Irish gentry thoroughly corrupted or frightened out of their senses, and with the “Government” enemy obviously bent on treating our national aspiration as an ignominious crime worthy to be ranked only with the offences of burglars or pick-pockets—still, there were men resolved to dare the worst and uttermost for but one chance of rousing that down-trodden people to one manful effort of resistance against so grievous a tyranny. The Irish Confederation reconstituted its council, and set itself more diligently than ever to the task of inducing the people to procure arms, with a view to a final struggle in the harvest. And as it was clear there was nothing the enemy dreaded so much as a bold and honest newspaper which would expose their plots of slaughter, and turn their liberal professions inside out, it was, before all things, necessary to establish a newspaper to take the place of the *United Irishman*.

It was a breach as deadly and imminent as ever yawned in a beleaguered wall; but men were found prompt to stand in it. Within two weeks after Mitchel's trial the *Irish Tribune* was issued, edited by O'Dogherty and Williams, with Antisell and Savage as contributors. In two weeks more, on the 24th of June, came forth another, and, perhaps, the ablest of our revolutionary organs—the *Irish Felon*. Its editor and proprietor was John Martin, a quiet country gentleman of the County Down, who had been for years connected with all national movements in Ireland,—the Repeal Association, the Irish Confederation,—but who had never been roused to the pitch of desperate resistance till he saw the bold and dashing atrocity of the enemy on the occasion of Mitchel's pretended trial and conviction. He came at last, along with many other quiet men, to the conclusion that the nation must now set its back to the wall. James

Fintan Lalor, one of the most powerful writers of his day, came up from Kildare County to aid in conducting the *Felon*, and for five weeks thereafter “Treason-felony” continued to be taught and enforced with great boldness and ability. But *six* weeks would have been too much for the patience of the Government. The police were ordered to forcibly stop the sale of papers by vendors in the streets; and warrants were issued for the arrest of all the editors—Martin, Duffy, O'Dogherty, and Williams. The country was beginning to bristle with pikes; men were praying for the whitening of the harvest; and it was plain that, before the reign of “law and order” should begin, other terrible examples must be made; other juries must be packed; then, after *that*, a Whig “Government” would surely begin to deal with Ireland in a conciliatory spirit!

Throughout all these scenes the horrible famine was raging as it had never raged before—the police and military, both in towns and in the country, were busily employed in the service of ejecting tenants—pulling down their houses—searching out and seizing hidden weapons—and escorting convoys of grain and provisions to the sea-side, as through an enemy's country. Yet rumours began to grow and spread (much-exaggerated rumours) of a very general arming amongst the peasantry and the clubmen of the towns, and the police had but small success in their searches for arms; for, in fact, these were carefully built into stone walls, or carried to the graveyards with a mourning funeral escort, and buried in coffins, shrouded in well-oiled flannel, “in hope of a happy resurrection.”

The enemy thought it wisest not to wait for the harvest, and resolved to bring matters to a head at once. Accordingly, they asked Parliament to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, so as to enable them to seize upon any person or number of persons whom they might think dangerous, and throw them into prison without any charge against them. Parliament passed the bill at once; and, in truth, it is an ordinary procedure in Ireland.

Instantly numerous warrants were placed in the hands of the omnipresent police; and in every town and village in Ireland sudden arrests were made. The enemy had taken care to inform themselves who were the leading and active confederates all over the island, the presidents and secretaries of clubs, and zealous organizers of drilling and pike exercise. These were seized from day to day, sometimes with circumstances of



brutality (which was useful to the enemy in "striking terror"), and thrust into dungeons, or paraded before their fellow-citizens in chains. Martin and the other editors were in Newgate prison awaiting transportation as felons. Warrants were out against O'Brien and Meagher.

Well, *the time* had come at last. If Ireland had one blow to strike, now was her day. Queen Victoria would not wait till the autumn should place in the people's hands the ample commissariat of their war, and decreed that if they *would* fight, they should, at least, fight fasting. O'Brien was at the house of a friend in Wexford County when he heard of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, and that a warrant had been issued for his own arrest. He was quickly joined by Dillon and Meagher. Doheny and MacManus, with some others, betook themselves to the Tipperary hills, and "put themselves upon the country." O'Gorman hurried to Limerick and Clare to see what preparation existed there for the struggle, and to give it a direction. Reilly and Smith ranged over Kilkenny and Tipperary, eagerly seeking for insurrectionary fuel ready to be kindled, and sometimes in communication with O'Brien and his party, at other times alone. To O'Brien, on account of his character, his services, and his value to the cause, the leadership seemed to be assigned by common consent.

It is very easy for those who sat at home in those days to criticise the proceedings of O'Brien, and the brave men who sought, in his company, for an honourable chance of throwing their lives away. But it must be obvious, from the narrative of the three years' previous famine, what a hopeless sort of material for spirited national resistance was then to be found in the rural districts of Ireland. Bands of exterminated peasants, trooping to the already too full poor houses; straggling columns of hunted wretches, with their old people, wives, and little ones, wending their way to Cork or Waterford to take shipping for America; the people not yet ejected frightened and desponding, with no interest in the land they tilled, no property in the house above their heads, no food, no arms, with the slavish habits bred by long ages of oppression ground into their souls, and that momentary proud flush of passionate hope kindled by O'Connell's agitation, long since dimmed and darkened by bitter hunger and hardship. It was no easy task to rouse such a people as this. But there is in the Irish nature a wonderful spring and an intense vitality, insomuch that the

chances of a successful insurrection in '48 may have been by no means desperate. At any rate, O'Brien and his comrades were resolute to give the people a chance, knowing full well that though they should be mown down in myriads by shot and steel, it would be a better lot than poor houses and famine graves.

It is needful, here, to speak of the Irish priesthood, and the part which they took in that last agony of our country. Hitherto, there has not been occasion to say much of the Catholic Church, though it makes so potent an element in Irish life, for the reason that in all vehement popular movements it always follows the people, and never leads. Unless the movement be strong and sweeping enough to command and coerce the clergy, the clergy keep aloof from it altogether. Instinctively the Church adheres to what is established, and opposes violent action. Thus, in O'Connell's Repeal agitation, several bishops held themselves neutral; and hundreds of priests, as was well known, were zealous repealers against their will—only because the popular passion was too strong for them to resist. Afterwards, however, many of the Catholic clergy had come over to the "Young Ireland" party. Some of them, indeed, being more Irishmen than Romans, did from the first fully sympathize with the national aspirations of their island—did profoundly feel her wrongs, and burn to redress or avenge them. When the final scene opened, however, and the whole might of the empire was gathering itself to crush us, the clergy, as a body, were found on the side of the Government, and cannot be severely blamed for it, as they were convinced of the utter hopelessness of the struggle at that time.

O'Brien, Dillon, and Meagher, with some few followers, and without arms or stores, taking the field against the potent monarchy of England, were, indeed, but a forlorn hope. They can scarcely be said to have had a plan. O'Brien resolutely refused to commence a struggle, which he felt to be for man's dearest rights, by attacking and plundering the estates and mansions of the gentry, who, however, were then generally fortified and barricaded in their own houses, to hold the country for the enemy.

For several days he went from place to place, attended by his friends, followed sometimes by two or three hundred people, half armed, always expecting to meet a party with a warrant for his arrest; in which case it would be *war*, both defensive and offensive, to the last extremity. All round him were country mansions of



nobles and gentlemen who had openly avowed themselves (in their "Addresses of Confidence") for the English, and against their own people; who had publicly branded *him* as a rebel, and offered their lives and fortunes for the work of crushing him; and he, an outlaw, declined to exact contributions from them to feed his followers and hold them together. All this was resolved and done from the purest and most conscientious motives, undoubtedly; but it was, perhaps, not the best mode of commencing a revolution.

All this while, from day to day, crowds of stout men, many of them armed, flocked to O'Brien's company; but they uniformly melted off, as usual, partly compelled by want of provisions, partly under the influence of the clergy. The last time he had any considerable party together was at Ballingarry, where forty-five armed police had barricaded themselves in a strong stone house, under the command of a certain Captain Trant, who certainly had the long-expected warrant to arrest O'Brien, but who was afraid to execute it until after the arrival of some further reinforcement. O'Brien went to one of the front windows, and called on Captain Trant to surrender. Trant demanded half an hour to consider. During this half hour some of the crowd had thrown a few stones through the windows; and Captain Trant, seeing that the people could not be controlled much longer by O'Brien, gave orders to fire. O'Brien rushed between the people and the window, climbed on the window, and once more called upon the police to surrender. At the first volley from the house two men fell dead, and others were wounded, and the crowd on that side fell back, leaving O'Brien almost alone in the garden before the house.

Trant was shortly afterwards reinforced by the force he expected. Mr. O'Brien's followers were by this time scattered and gone. He scarce made an effort even to provide for his own safety, and was soon arrested.

In fact, there was no insurrection. The people in those two or three counties did not believe that he meant to fight; and nothing would persuade them of that but some desperate enterprise. Yet they were all ready and willing; and, indeed, are at all times ready and willing to fight against a dominion, which represents to them nearly all that they know of evil in this world.

From the first moment that the repeal of the *Habeas Corpus* Act placed the liberties of Irishmen at the disposal of Lord Clarendon, the police received secret orders to arrest all leading confeder-

ates, both in town and country. A return was in the beginning of the next year, 1849, made to Parliament of the number of persons, and their names, who were imprisoned under that law. There were one hundred and eighteen of them; including most of the very men on whom O'Brien might reasonably have relied to sustain his movement. They were all imprisoned in various jails, without any charge, or one word of explanation; removed in batches from one prison to some other, in a distant part of the island, with no other object, apparently, but to exhibit them in chains, and strike a wholesome terror into all spectators.

To arrive at an accurate list and due selection of leading confederates, Lord Clarendon employed without scruple both post-office spying\* and the regular service of detectives.

Certain "trials" ensued in the usual style. First, the editors were brought to trial under the new "Treason-felony" Act; and O'Brien and his immediate comrades, under the Common Law, for the crime of "high treason," having appeared in arms against the "Government." The Government would gladly have dispensed with these trials, and removed their captives out of the way by a more summary process. But they must not forget that they were a "Liberal" Government, and had a reputation to support before the world. Ireland was not Naples, but, indeed, a far more miserable country, and political offenders could by no means be suffered to perish by long confinement in subterranean dungeons without trial. But, then, arose the question of juries; and the "Government" knew full well that no jury in Ireland impartially empaneled according to law, and really representing the nation, would convict one of those men for any offence whatsoever.

They could not refuse a trial; but one thing they could do, which the King of Naples had not yet learned—they could pack the juries. No doubt it was painful to have to pack juries *again*. Whig reputation could ill endure it. But they hoped this would be the last time. They knew that in the eyes of Englishmen, the extreme urgency of the occasion would justify this one last tremendous fraud. When we say, "in the eyes of Englishmen," the reader will understand that we

\* The return on this subject laid before Parliament only brings down the letter-spies as far as Lord De Grey, in 1843. But as the report on the occasion declared the post-office *espionage* a needful branch of administration in Ireland, it may be assumed without scruple that it was resorted to not only by Lord Clarendon, but by every Viceroy since.



mean the ruling classes of Englishmen—namely, the landed interests, and the monied and mercantile interests; in short, those Englishmen whose opinions and interests are alone consulted in the government of that country. To them it was an absolute necessity of their existence that Irish national movements should be crushed down by any means and all means.

The Whig Government, in fact, felt that if they satisfied the men of rank and money in England, they did the whole duty of Whigs; and the men of rank and money were eagerly crying out to have the last embers of that long national struggle stamped out.

O'Brien, Meagher, MacManus, and O'Donohoe were to have their trial before a special commission in Limerick, the capital of Tipperary. On the details of these trials we need not dwell, because they were on the same pattern with other scenes of this same kind already narrated. The officials of the Crown showed a stern, dogged determination to disregard every remonstrance, to refuse every application, and to do the work intrusted to them in the most coarse, insolent, and thorough-going style. For example, Mr. Whiteside, O'Brien's counsel, reminded the Court "that, in England, persons charged with high treason are allowed a copy of the jurors' panel, and a list of the witnesses to be examined on the part of the Crown." Here is one extract from the report of the "trial":—

"The learned counsel put it to the Court, whether Mr. O'Brien, under trial in a country said to be under the same Government and laws as England, should not have the same privilege which he would enjoy, as a matter of right, if he happened to be tried on the other side of the channel.

"The Court decided that the prisoner was not entitled to the privilege."

When the clerk read the names of the jury-panel, Mr. O'Brien, of course, challenged the array, on the ground of fraud; and, of course, the Court ruled against him.

"Mr. Whiteside stated that it made little difference whether his client were tried by a jury selected from a panel thus constituted, or taken and shot through the head on the high-road. No less than one hundred Catholics had been struck off the panel, and so few left on, that Mr. O'Brien's right to challenge was now little better than a farce. This objection was also overruled—Chief-Justice Blackburne having decided that the panel was properly made out

O'Brien, whose mind was made up to meet any fate, stood in the dock during this nine days' trial with a haughty calmness. What thoughts passed through that proud heart as the odious game proceeded, no human eye will ever read; but of one thing we may be sure—his grief, shame, and indignation were not for himself, but for the down-trodden country where such a scene could be enacted in the open day, and against the will of nine-tenths of its inhabitants.

There followed, in due course, the usual barbarous death sentence:—

"That sentence is, that you, William Smith O'Brien, be taken from hence to the place from whence you came, and be thence drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, and be there hanged by the neck until you are dead; and that afterwards your head shall be severed from your body, and your body divided into four quarters, to be disposed of as Her Majesty shall think fit. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

He hears it unmoved as a statue, inclines his head in a stately bow, politely takes leave of his counsel, and returns to his prison.

Again, and again, and again, the same process was performed in all its parts. MacManus was next tried, then O'Donohoe, then Meagher; their juries were all carefully packed; they were all sentenced to be hanged; and they all met the announcement of their fate as men ought. For more than a month these trials went on from day to day; and it was the 23d of October when the last sentence was pronounced. A strong garrison of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, occupied the town, and inclosed the scene with a hedge of steel. Outside, the people muttered deep curses, and chafed with impotent rage. A few daring spirits, headed by O'Mahony, once contemplated an attack and rescue; but the people had been too grievously frightened, and too effectually starved by the Government, to be equal to so dashing an exploit; and so that solemn and elaborate insult was once more put upon our name and nation, and the four men, who had sought to save their people from so abject a condition lay undisturbed in Clonmel jail, sentenced to death. And whosoever has studied even the imperfect sketch given in these pages of the potent and minutely elaborated system of oppression that pressed upon that nation at every point, and tied down every limb, watching over every man, woman, and child, at their uprising and downlying, so as to be enabled to foresee and to baffle even the slightest approach to combina-



tion for a national purpose, \* will assuredly not wonder at the utter and abject helplessness of the nation in presence of so cruel an outrage.

The newspaper editors were still to be "tried." In the months of October and November, 1848, Duffy, of the *Nation*, Williams and O'Doherty, of the *Tribune*, and Martin, of the *Felon*, were successively brought up for trial in the City Court House, of Green Street. Their newspapers had been suppressed weeks before, their offices broken up, their types, and presses, and books seized. O'Doherty and Martin were "convicted" by well-packed juries, containing not a single Catholic. In the cases of Duffy and Williams, the enemy ventured to leave one or two Catholics on the juries. Williams was acquitted; Duffy's jury disagreed, and he was retained in prison till a more tractable jury could be manufactured. Again he was brought to trial, and again the jury disagreed. Still he was kept in custody, though his health was rapidly failing; and at last, when all apprehension of trouble seemed to be over, and the more dangerous conspirators were disposed of, the "Government" yielded to a memorial on his behalf, and abandoned the prosecution.

In the matter of those sentenced to death, ministers, after much deliberation, decided on sparing their lives, and commuting their punishment to transportation for life. This was done under the false pretence of clemency; but it was, in truth, the most refined cruelty. It was, moreover, illegal—there being no law to authorize such a commutation. The prisoners, therefore, objected through their counsel; they had no use for life under such circumstances, and demanded to have the extreme benefit of the law. Ministers, however, were resolved to be merciful—introduced an Act into Parliament, empowering the Queen to transport them, had it passed at once, and immediately shipped them off to herd with felons in the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land. O'Doherty and Martin, having been originally sentenced to ten years' transportation, were sent away at the same time, but in another ship; and for more than five years, in the most degrading bondage, they expiated the crime of "not having sold their country."

A few unconcerted and desperate at-

\* We may once more refer to the memorable words of an English Attorney-General's description of the British régime in Ireland: "Notice is taken of every person that is able to do either good or hurt. It is known not only how they live, and what they do, but it is foreseen what they purpose or intend to do."

tempts were made in Munster, by O'Mahony and Savage, by Brennan and Gray, to draw the people together, and achieve some one daring act which might awaken the insurrectionary spirit. They all failed, or were easily suppressed. The clergy were now decidedly and actively in the interest of "law and order"—that is, in the interest of England; and the more regular police were on the alert by day and night, and the island bristled with forty thousand bayonets. "Tranquillity reigned in Warsaw." John O'Connell, in Conciliation Hall, pointed to the sad fate of those who had disregarded the counsels of the "Liberator;" intreated the people to sustain him in his moral and peaceful appeals to Parliament; and promised that Ireland should be, at some early day, "first flower of the earth and first gem of the sea."

What to do now with this Ireland, thus fallen under the full and peaceful possession of her "sister island," was the subject of serious thought in England. The famine was still slaying its tens of thousands, and the Government emigration scheme was drawing away many thousands more, and shooting them out naked and destitute on the shores of the St. Lawrence, so that it was hoped the "Celts" would soon be thinned out to the proper point. The very danger so lately escaped, however, brought home to the British Government, and to the Irish landlords, the stern necessity of continued extermination. It was better, they felt, to have too few hands to till the ground, than too many for the security of law and order.

A plan for a new "Plantation of Ireland" was promulgated by Sir Robert Peel—that is, for replacing the Irish with good Anglo-Saxons. This project for a new plantation in Ireland was anxiously revolved in the councils of the Government. It began to be believed that the peasant class, being now almost sufficiently thinned out, and the claim of tenants to some sort of right or title to the land they tilled having been successfully resisted and defeated—that the structure of society in Ireland having been well and firmly planted upon a basis of able-bodied pauperism (which the English, however, called "independent labour")—the time was come to effect a transfer of the real estate of the island from Irish to English hands. This grand idea afterwards elaborated itself into the famous "Encumbered Estates Act."

The conquest of the island was now regarded in England as effectually consummated. England, great, populous, and wealthy, with all the resources and vast



patronage of an existing Government in her hands; with a magnificent army and navy; with the established course and current of commerce steadily flowing in the precise direction that suited her interests; with a powerful party on her side in Ireland itself, bound to her by lineage and by interest; and above all, with her vast brute mass lying between us and the rest of Europe, enabling her to intercept the natural sympathies of other struggling nations, to interpret between us and the rest of mankind, and represent the troublesome sister island exactly in the light in which she wished to be regarded. England, prosperous, potent, and at peace with all the earth besides, had succeeded (to her immortal honour and glory) in anticipating and crushing out of sight the last agonies of resistance in a small, poor, and divided island, which she had herself made poor and divided, carefully disarmed, almost totally disfranchised, and almost totally deprived of the benefits of that very British "law" against which we revolted with such loathing and horror. England had done this; and whatsoever credit and prestige, whatsoever profit and power could be gained by such a feat, she has them all. "Now, for the first time these six hundred years," said the *London Times*, "England has Ireland at her mercy, and can deal with her as she pleases."

It was an opportunity not to be lost, for the interests of British civilization. Parliament met late in January, 1849. The Queen, in her "speech," lamented that "another failure of the potato crop had caused severe distress in Ireland," and thereupon asked Parliament to continue, "for a limited period," the extraordinary powers—that is, the power of proclaiming any district under martial law, and of throwing suspected persons into prison, without any charge against them. The Act was passed, of course.

Then, as the famine of 1848 was fully as grievous and destructive as any of the previous famines—as the rate-payers were impoverished, and in most of the unions could not pay the rates already due, and were thus rapidly sinking into the condition of paupers, giving up the hopeless effort to maintain themselves by honest industry, and throwing themselves on the earnings of others—as the poor houses were all filled to overflowing, and the exterminated people were either lying down to die or crowding into the emigrant ships—as, in short, the Poor law and the New Poor law, and the Improved Poor law, and the Supplementary Poor

law, had all manifestly proved a "failure," Lord John Russell's next step was to give Ireland *more* Poor laws.

The expression *failure* must, however, be qualified as before. They were a failure for their professed purpose, that of relieving the famine, but were a complete success for their real purpose, that of uprooting the people from the land, and casting them forth to perish. Irishmen have not much faith in the "Government" statistics of their country; but as it is well to see how much the enemy was willing to admit, we give some details from a report furnished in '48 by Captain Larcom, under the orders of Government, and founded on local reports of police inspectors. The main facts are epitomized thus, for one year:—

"In the number of farms, of from *one* to *five* acres, the decrease has been twenty-four thousand one hundred and forty-seven; from *five* to *fifteen* acres, twenty-seven thousand three hundred and seventy-nine; from *fifteen* to *thirty* acres, four thousand two hundred and seventy-four; whilst of farms *above* thirty acres, the *increase* has been three thousand six hundred and seventy. Seventy thousand occupiers, with their families, numbering about three hundred thousand, were rooted out of the land.

"In Leinster, the decrease in the number of holdings not exceeding one acre, as compared with the decrease of '47, was three thousand seven hundred and forty-nine; above one, and not exceeding five, was four thousand and twenty-six; of five, and not exceeding fifteen, was two thousand five hundred and forty-six; of fifteen to thirty, three hundred and ninety-one; making a total of ten thousand six hundred and seventeen.

"In Munster, the decrease in the holdings under thirty acres is stated at eighteen thousand eight hundred and fourteen; the increase over thirty acres, one thousand three hundred and ninety-nine.

"In Ulster, the decrease was one thousand five hundred and two; the increase one thousand one hundred and thirty-four.

"In Connaught, where the labour of extermination was least, the clearance has been most extensive. There, in particular, the roots of holders of the soil were never planted deep beneath the surface, and consequently were exposed to every exterminator's hand. There were, in 1847, thirty-five thousand six hundred and thirty-four holders of from one to five acres; in the following year there were less by nine thousand seven hundred and three. There were seventy-



six thousand seven hundred and seven holders of from five to fifteen acres ; less in one year by twelve thousand eight hundred and ninety-one. Those of from fifteen to thirty acres were reduced by two thousand one hundred and twenty-one. A total depopulation of twenty-six thousand four hundred and ninety-nine holders of land, exclusive of their families, was effected in Connaught in one year."

On this report it may be remarked that it was a list of killed and wounded in one year of carnage only—and of one class of people only. It takes no account of the dead in that multitudinous class thinned the most by famine, who had no land at all, but lived by the labour of their hands, and who were exposed before the others as having nothing but life to lose. As for the landlords, already encumbered by debt, the pressure of the poor rates was fast breaking them down. In most cases they were not so much as the receivers of their own rents, and had no more control over the bailiffs, sheriffs, and police, who plundered and chased away the people, than one of the pillars of their own grand entrance gates.

The slaughter by famine was enormous this season. Here is one paragraph from amongst the commercial reports of the Irish papers, which will suggest more than any laboured narrative could inculcate :—

"Upwards of one hundred and fifty ass hides have been delivered in Dublin from the County Mayo, for exportation to Liverpool. The carcasses, owing to the scarcity of provisions, had been used as food !"

But those who could afford to dine upon famished jackasses were few indeed. During this winter of 1848-49, hundreds of thousands perished of hunger. During this same winter the herds and harvests raised on Irish ground were floating off to England on every tide ; and during this same winter almost every steamship from England daily carried Irish paupers, men, women, and children, away from Liverpool and Bristol, to share the good cheer of their kinsmen at home.

It was in this state of things that Lord John Russell, having first secured a continued suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, proposed an additional and novel sort of poor rate for Ireland. It was called the "Rate in Aid." That to say, Poor Law Unions which were still solvent, and could still in some measure maintain their own local poor, were to be rated for relief of such unions as had sunk under the pressure. Assuming that

Ireland and England are two integral parts of a "United Kingdom" (as we are assured they are), it seems hard to understand why a district in Leinster should be rated to relieve a pauper territory in Mayo, and a district in Yorkshire not ; or to comprehend why old and spent Irish labourers, who had given the best of their health and strength to the service of England, should be shipped off to Ireland to increase and intensify the pauperism and despair. But so it was. The maxim was that "the property of Ireland must support the poverty of Ireland," without consideration of the fact that the property of Ireland was all this time supporting the luxury of England.

The next measure passed in the same session of Parliament was the "Encumbered Estates Act"—the Act of Twelfth and Thirteenth Victoria, chap. 77. Under this a royal commission was issued constituting a new court "for the sale of Encumbered Estates ;" and the scope and intent of it were to give a short and summary method of bringing such estates to sale, on petition either of creditors or of owners. Before that time the only mode of doing this was through the slow and expensive proceedings of the Court of Chancery ; and the number of encumbered landlords had grown so very large since the famine began, their debts so overwhelming, and their rental so curtailed, that the London Jews, money-brokers, and insurance offices required a speedier and cheaper method of bringing their property to the hammer. What ought to be fully understood is, that this Act was not intended to relieve, and did not relieve, anybody in Ireland ; but that, under pretence of facilitating legal proceedings, it contemplated a sweeping confiscation and new plantation of the island. The English press was already complacently anticipating a peaceable transfer of Irish land to English and Scotch capitalists, and took pains to encourage them to invest their money under the new Act. Ireland, it was now declared, had become tranquil ; "the Celts were gone ;" and if any trouble should arise, there was the *Habeas Corpus* Suspension Act, and the horse, foot, and artillery, and the juries. Singular to relate, however, the new Act did not operate satisfactorily in that direction. English capitalists had a wholesome terror of Tipperary, and of the precarious tenure by which an Irish landlord holds his life ; insomuch that the great bulk of the sales made by the commissioners were made to Irishmen ; and in the official return of the operations of



the court up to October, 1851, it appears that, while the gross amount produced by the sales had been more than three and a half millions sterling, there had only been fifty-two English and Scottish purchasers, to the amount of £319,486.\*

Seeing this imperfect progress in the new plantation of Ireland, Ministers, in March, 1850, introduced a supplemental bill. The Solicitor-General, who moved it, was even so incautious as to admit the motive. "They had devised a plan," he said, "which, it was hoped, would induce *capitalists from England* to take an interest in these sales." The plan was a mere financial operation, creating a species of debentures chargeable on the land, and passing current like any other stock or scrip; but it need not be described in detail, for the plan was abandoned, and it is only mentioned here to exhibit the policy of England, as indicated by the Solicitor-General.

Down to the 25th May, 1857, there had been given orders for sale to the number of three thousand one hundred and ninety-seven; the property had been sold to seven thousand two hundred and sixteen purchasers, of whom six thousand nine hundred and two were Irish, the rest English, Scotch, or other foreigners. The estates already sold brought upwards of twenty millions sterling, which was almost all distributed to creditors and other parties interested. The result to Ireland was simply this: about one-fifteenth part of the island had changed hands, had gone from one landlord and come to another landlord; the result to the great tenant class was simply *nil*. The new landlord came over them armed with the power of life and death, like his predecessor, but he had no local or personal attachment, which in some cases used to mitigate the severity of landlord rule, and he was bound to make interest on his investment. The estates, therefore, have been broken up, on an average, into one-half their former size, and this has been much dwelt upon as an "amelioration;" but we have yet to learn that small landlords are more mild and merciful than great ones. On the whole, the "Encumbered Estates Act" has benefited only the money-lenders of England.

As to "tenant-right," the salutary custom explained before, and which did once practically secure to the tenantry in some portions of Ulster a permanency of tenure on payment of their rent, our Parliamentary patriots have been agitating for it, begging for it, conferring with ministers about it, eating public dinners,

\* *Almanac and Directory*, 1852.

making speeches, and soliciting votes on account of it; but they have never made; and are never like to make, an approach by one hair's breadth to its attainment. It is absolutely essential to the existence of the British empire that the Irish peasant class be kept in a condition which will make them entirely manageable, easy to be thinned out when they grow too numerous, and an available *matériel* for armies. It is a necessity for the British commercial, social, and governmental system; but this is not said by way of complaint. Those who are of opinion that British civilization is a blessing, and a light to lighten the world, will easily reconcile themselves to the needful condition. Those who deem it the most base and horrible tyranny that has ever scandalized the earth, will probably wish that its indispensable prop, Ireland, were knocked from under it.

In the meantime, neither the Encumbered Estates Act, nor any other Act made or to be made by an English Parliament, has done or aimed to do anything towards giving the Irish tenant at will the smallest interest in the land he tills; but, on the contrary, the whole course of the famine legislation was directed to the one end of shaking small lease holders loose from the soil, and converting them into tenants at will, or into "independent labourers," or able-bodied paupers, or lean corpses. Understand, further, that the condition of an Irish "tenant at will" is unique on the face of the globe,\* is utterly unintelligible to most civilized Europeans, and is only to be found within the sway of that Constitution which is the envy of surrounding nations. The German, Von Raumer, making a tour in Ireland, thus tries to explain the thing:—

"How shall I translate *tenants at will*? *Wegjagbare*? Expellable? Serfs? But, in the ancient days of vassalage, it consisted rather in keeping the vassals attached to the soil, and by no means in driving them away. An ancient vassal is a lord compared with the present tenant at will, to whom the law affords no defence. Why not call them *Jagabare* (*chaseable*)? But this difference lessens the analogy; that for hares, stags, and deer, there is a season during which no one is allowed to hunt them, whereas tenants at will are hunted all the year round. And if any one would defend his farm (as badgers and foxes are allowed to do), it is here denominated *rebellion*."

\* Paralleled in some sort only by the *ryots* of India—another people privileged to enjoy the blessings of British rule.



In 1849 it was still believed that the depopulation had not proceeded far enough; and the English Government was fully determined, having so gracious an opportunity, to make a clean sweep. One of the provisions of Lord John Russell's *Rate in Aid* bill was for imposing an additional rate of two shillings and sixpence in the pound to promote *emigration*. During the two years 1848-49, the Government Census Commissioners admit nine thousand three hundred and ninety-five deaths by famine alone; a number which would be about true if multiplied by twenty-five. In 1850 they were nearly seven thousand; as admitted by the same authorities; and in the first quarter of 1851, six hundred and fifty-two deaths by hunger, they say, "are recorded."

In the very midst of all this havoc, in August, 1849, Her Majesty's Ministers thought the coast was clear for a royal visit. The Queen had long wished, it was said, to visit her people of Ireland, and the great army of persons who, in Ireland, are paid to be loyal, were expected to get up the appearance of rejoicing. Of course, there were crowds in the streets, and the natural courtesy of the people prevented almost everything which could grate upon the lady's ear, or offend her eye. One Mr. O'Reilly, indeed, of South Great George's Street, hoisted on the top of his house a large *black* banner, displaying the crownless harp, and draped his windows with black curtains, showing the words *famine* and *pestilence*; but the police burst into his house, tore down the flag and the curtains, and thrust the proprietor into jail.

On the whole, the Viceroy's precautions against any show of disaffection were complete and successful. Nine out of ten citizens of Dublin eagerly hoped that Her Majesty would make this visit the occasion of a "pardon" to O'Brien and his comrades. Lord Clarendon's organs, therefore, and his thousand placemen, and agents of every grade, diligently whispered into the public ear that the Queen would certainly pardon the State prisoners if she were not insulted by repeal demonstrations—in short, if there was not one word said about those individuals. The consequence was that no whisper was heard about repeal nor about the State prisoners.

Although there was no chance of tenant-right, no chance of Ireland being allowed to manage her own affairs—yet, towards Catholics of the educated classes, there was much liberality. Mr. Wyse was sent as an ambassador to Greece; Mr. More

O'Ferrall was made Governor of Malta; many barristers, once loud in their patriotic devotion at Conciliation Hall, were appointed to commissionerships and other offices,\* and Ireland became "tranquil" enough. For result of the whole long struggle, England was left, for a time, more securely in possession than ever of the property, lives, and industry of the Irish nation. She had not parted with a single atom of her plunder, nor in the slightest degree weakened any of her garrisons, either military, civil, or ecclesiastical. Her "Established Church" remained in full force—the wealthiest Church in the world, quartered upon the poorest people, who abhor its doctrine, and regard its pastors as ravening wolves. It had, indeed, often been denounced in the London Parliament by Whigs out of place. Mr. Roebuck had called it "the greatest ecclesiastical enormity in Europe." Mr. Macaulay had termed it "the most utterly absurd and indefensible of all the institutions now existing in the civilized world." But we have already learned what value there is in the liberal declarations of Whigs out of place. Once in place and power, they felt that the "enormity" of the Established Church, absurd and indefensible as it was, constituted one of their greatest and surest holds upon the Irish aristocracy, to whose younger sons and dependents it affords a handsome and not too laborious livelihood.

\* By degrees, considerable numbers of Catholic barristers have been admitted to the judicial bench (although never to the rank of Chancellor). They usually earned this promotion by political services; and they have proved, in fact, the most useful servants to the English Government in carrying on the infamous transactions which pass for trials of "political offenders" in Ireland. They sit by gravely and complacently, and see juries packed for the destruction of better and braver men than those judges ever were. They know that the object of the odious fraud over which they preside is to perpetuate British dominion over their unhappy country—unhappy in nothing more than in having given birth to *them*. They know, further, that the operation and intent of that British domination are to plunder and to exterminate their countrymen, their kinsmen, their own flesh and blood. And they have deliberately elected their side—against their countrymen and kinsmen, and with the mortal enemies of their countrymen. In other words, they have sold their country and themselves; and the special service which *they* are expected to do, the job which they sit on that bench to put through, is precisely to countenance this very fraud and villany of jury-packing,—to grace it with their robes and ermine—to preside with dignified gravity while the Sheriff and Attorney-General do their wicked business—looking all the while as if it were a solemn inquest they are holding—and then, with feeling voice, and in a high moral tone, and with the solemn prate usual on such occasions, to sentence to death or exile a man who has *not been tried*; a man, too, whom they are forced to respect, even in their own depraved hearts, while they hypocritically lecture him upon his own enormous iniquities.



The Orangemen, also, were still maintained in full force. They are all armed; for no bench of magistrates will refuse a good Protestant the liberty of keeping a gun; and, lest they might not have enough, the Government sometimes supplies arms for distribution among the lodges. The police and detective system continued to be more highly organized than ever; and the Government Board of "National" Education more diligently than ever inculcated the folly and vice of national aspirations.

Yet Ireland, we are told, has been, since the famine, improving and prosperous. Yes; it cannot be denied that, two millions and a half of the people having been slain or driven to seek safety by flight, the survivors began to live better for a time. There was a smaller supply of labour, with the same demand for it—therefore wages were higher. There was more cattle and grain to export to England, because there were fewer mouths to be fed; and England (in whose hands are the issues of life and death for Ireland) can afford to let so many live. Upper classes, and lower classes, merchants, lawyers, state officials, civil and military, are indebted for all that they have, for all that they are, or hope for, to the sufferance and forbearance of a foreign and hostile nation. This being the case, the prosperity of Ireland, even such ignominious prosperity as it is, has no guarantee or security.

A few statistics may fitly conclude this part of the subject.

The census of Ireland in 1841 gave a population of eight millions one hundred and seventy-five thousand one hundred and twenty-five. At the usual rate of increase, there must have been, in 1846, when the famine commenced, at least eight millions seven hundred and fifty thousand; at the same rate of increase, there ought to have been, in 1851 (according to the estimate of the Census Commissioners), nine millions eighteen thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine. But in that year, after five seasons of artificial famine, there were found alive only six millions five hundred and fifty-two thousand three hundred and eighty-five—a *deficit* of about two millions and a half. Now, what became of those two millions and a half?

The "Government" Census Commissioners, and compilers of returns of all sorts, whose principal duty it has been, since that fatal time, to conceal the amount of the havoc, attempt to account for nearly the whole deficiency by emigration. In Thom's *Official Almanac*, we find

set down on one side the actual decrease from 1841 to 1851 (that is, without taking into account the increase by births in that period), one million six hundred and twenty-three thousand one hundred and fifty-four. Against this, they place their own estimate of the emigration during those same ten years, which they put down at one million five hundred and eighty-nine thousand one hundred and thirty-three. But, in the first place, the decrease did not *begin* till 1846—there had been till then a rapid increase in the population; the Government returns, then, not only ignore the increase, but set the emigration of *ten* years against the depopulation of *five*. This will not do. We must reduce their emigrants by one-half, say to six hundred thousand, and add to the depopulation the estimated increase *up* to 1846, say half a million. This will give upwards of two millions, whose disappearance is to be accounted for, and six hundred thousand emigrants in the other column. Balance unaccounted for, *a million and a half*.

This is without computing those who were born in the five famine years; whom we may leave to be balanced by the deaths from *natural* causes in the same period.

Now, that million and a half of men, women, and children, were carefully, prudently, and peacefully *slain* by the English Government. They died of hunger, in the midst of abundance which their own hands created; and it is quite immaterial to distinguish those who perished in the agonies of famine itself from those who died of typhus fever, which in Ireland is always caused by famine.

Further, this was strictly an *artificial* famine—that is to say, it was a famine which desolated a rich and fertile island, that produced every year abundance and superabundance to sustain all her people and many more. The English, indeed, call that famine a dispensation of Providence; and ascribe it entirely to the blight of the potato. But potatoes failed in like manner all over Europe, yet there was no famine save in Ireland. The British account of the matter, then, is, first, a fraud; second, a blasphemy. The Almighty, indeed, sent the potato blight, but the English created the famine.

And, lastly, it has been shown, in the course of this narrative, that the depopulation of the country was not only encouraged by artificial means, namely, the Out-door Relief Act, the Labour Rate Act, and the emigration schemes; but that extreme care and diligence were used to prevent relief coming to the doomed island from abroad; and that the benevolent



contributions of Americans and other foreigners were turned aside from their desired objects—not, let us say, in order that none should be saved alive, but that no interference should be made with the principles of political economy.

The Census Commissioners close one of their late reports with these words:—

“In conclusion, we feel it will be gratifying to your Excellency to find that, although the population had been diminished in so remarkable a manner, by famine, disease, and emigration, and has been since decreasing, the results of the Irish census are, *on the whole, satisfactory.*”

The commissioners mean to say that, although there are fewer men and women, there are more cattle and hogs for the English markets.

But the depopulation of the country by no means ended with the famine. Between 1851 and 1861, during which period of ten years there was no officially declared famine, but, on the contrary, Ireland was continually felicitated by English Viceroy and statesmen upon her returning prosperity, we find that the diminution of the people steadily proceeded, so that, in 1861, the Census Commissioners found alive upon the Irish soil only five millions seven hundred and sixty-four thousand five hundred and forty-three individuals—less by three millions of souls than the population in 1845. This destruction of people is to be accounted for only in part by emigration, although emigration was very large in all those years. But there is no fact better established in social and economic science than that emigration never does thin the people of any country to anything like its apparent amount; because, in a healthy condition of society, the loss from this cause is compensated by the greater increase of people at home. But the cruel truth is, that society in Ireland is in ruins; it has no longer any recuperative energy. British civilization has taken so powerful and deadly a hold of it, that not only do the people fly in multitudes from the terrible “prosperity” of their country, but those who remain and strive to hold their ground are perishing where they stand.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

1850—1851.

Depopulation—Emigration—“Plea for the Celtic Race”—Decay of the Irish Electoral Body—Act to amend Representation—“Papal Aggression”—Rage in England—Ecclesiastical Titles Bill—Never Enforced—And Why?—Orange Outrage in Down County—“Dolly’s Brae”—Style of Orange Processions—Condition of the Country—Further Emigration—Still more Extermination—Crime and Outrage—Plenty and Prosperity in England—Conclusion.

In 1851 the island of Ireland still contained six and a half millions of people; which was much too large a population to be compatible with English policy. It has been seen, in an earlier page of this narrative, that the British Government and Parliament had been long anxiously occupied, even before the first symptom of the “famine,” in devising the best, cheapest, and readiest mode of getting rid of what was constantly called the “surplus population” of Ireland. In fact and practice, the migration of the poorer people had been proceeding on a considerable and still increasing scale for many years. No season passed in which thousands of Irishmen, wearied and worn out by the struggle against remediless misery and hopeless aggression, did not bid adieu to their dear native country, to seek a happier future in some distant land. The general use of steam in ocean navigation had also greatly facilitated the movement of emigration, by shortening distances and bringing continents nearer to one another. The whole amount of the emigration from Great Britain and Ireland, for the year 1815, was but two thousand and eighty-one persons; but in 1852 it amounted to one hundred and seventy-six times that number—namely, three hundred and sixty-eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-four.\*

In 1835 a Parliamentary Commission reported that there were in Ireland two millions three hundred and eighty thousand persons always in danger of perishing by hunger; and the island (although the most fertile country in all the earth) being even then periodically visited by terrible dearths and famine. It may have been natural to conclude that it would be doing Ireland a signal service to multiply the means of emigration; but in carrying out this idea, the Government was resolved to bring the whole movement of emigration, as well as everything else that was *Irish*, under its own control as far as possible. During the fifteen years which preceded the famine (1831-46), Ireland alone had furnished more than eight hundred thousand emigrants out of the total emigration from the three kingdoms. The exact numbers are eight hundred and nine thousand two hundred and forty-four, making an annual average of fifty-three thousand nine hundred and forty-nine; and the number for all the three kingdoms during the same period was one million one hundred and seventy-one thousand four hundred and eighty-five.†

\* General Report of the Emigration Commissioners, 1861. Appendix.

† Reports of Commissioners of Emigration, in *Thom’s Official Directory*. We often cite this sta-



Yet the excess of births, over both deaths and emigration, continued to make a sensible increase in the population; and in the very same year (1841), in which had occurred the largest *exodus* during that period, the census showed that the population of the island was greater than it had ever been before, and greater than it has ever been since officially declared—namely, eight millions one hundred and seventy-five thousand one hundred and twenty-four.\*

This result, showing the nullity of emigration as an agency of depleting a population, might have been more surprising if it had not been long foreseen. Far from deranging the calculations of economic science, it confirmed the conclusions of the best economists. No writer, native or foreign, who has treated of Irish affairs, has estimated with more sagacity the actual condition and necessities of our country than the illustrious French publicist, M. Gustave de Beaumont. Studying, in 1839, the condition of Ireland, and considering whether the favourite British prescription of emigration could in any great measure cure the miseries which he had witnessed in the country, M. de Beaumont applied himself to the solution of these questions:—1st. What should be the proportions of the emigration if it were to materially affect the situation of the people? 2nd. Would emigration upon such a scale be possible? 3rd. Supposing it possible, would it be a radical solution of the difficulty? The advocates of wholesale emigration (all of them Englishmen) answered the first question by estimating at two millions—or from two to four millions—the number of persons who must quit Ireland, in order to create at once so sensible a void in the population as should leave the rest at ease. The second question, then, was easy to answer—that on so vast a scale the project was simply impossible, for want of sufficient means of transport. For supposing that each emigrant vessel carried a thousand passengers, there must be employed in the operation two thousand ships. This would put in requisition the whole British merchant navy, and withdraw it from the commerce of the world, for a project in itself chimerical; for it would have been impossible to provide funds for the needful

expenses; and no country, not even the United States, could be expected to receive such an invasion *en masse*, and provide the unhappy invaders with the means and opportunity of earning their bread by their labour. But, assuming all these difficulties overcome, then arose M. de Beaumont's third question: Was it certain that, the system of land tenure remaining the same, emigration would cure the evils of the country, and effect a social transformation? On this point our very intelligent foreign visitor found it easy to demonstrate that the removal of one-third, or even half, of the population would be no radical remedy. The difficulty for Ireland, as he plainly saw, was not to make the land produce a sufficiency of food for all its people, but lay altogether in the system of land tenure. "For," says the author, "if it be one of the settled principles of land proprietors that the farmer should have no other profit out of his cultivation but just what is strictly necessary for his subsistence; and if it be the general custom to apply this system rigorously, so that every improvement in the farmer's way of living brings with it necessarily a rise in his rent, on this hypothesis, which, for those who know Ireland, is a sad reality, what would be the advantage of a diminution of the population?"\* "Thus," he continues, "after many thousands of the Irish shall have disappeared, the lot of the remainder will probably be no way altered—they still may remain as miserable as they were before. It has been seen, in the preceding inquiry, that with but one-third of its present inhabitants, Ireland was a century ago as indigent as in our own day, being subjected then, as at present, to the same causes of misery, independent of numbers." M. de Beaumont here refers to the authority of Swift and of Berkeley, which sufficiently establishes the misery of Ireland in their days.

In all this investigation the singularity is, that M. de Beaumont, knowing the wealth and fertility of Ireland, and how she not only produced every year more than her people could consume, but also exported immense quantities of her produce, did not come at once to the conclusion, and proclaim his conclusion, that Ireland and the Irish are under the control of mortal enemies, whose single policy is to abolish the Irish race off the face of the earth.

Another calm and diligent inquirer,† after giving an account of the immense

tistical annual, prepared by authority of the British Government. But (on that very account) it is untrustworthy, unless when it bears necessarily or unintentionally *against* the Government, and it is only for such evidence that we have recourse to it.

\* But in 1845 (when no census was taken) the population must have amounted almost to nine millions. This fact is too often overlooked, and by the enemy's Government purposely ignored, for obvious reasons.

\* M. de Beaumont, II., 103.

† The Abbé Perraud. *Etudes sur l'Irlande contemporaine*.



schemes of wholesale emigration, remarks:—"It is in view of these sad teachings of the past that the most sincere and intelligent friends of Ireland counselled the British Government rather to expend in vast works of drainage and cultivation the sums estimated as required for the transport of emigrants. Lord Devon's Commission calculated that the emigration of one hundred thousand persons *per annum*, if effected at the public expense, and putting the cost at the moderate amount of six pounds sterling for each person, would cost £600,000 a year—a sum which, annually applied to the purchase and improvement of unproductive lands, would undoubtedly permit the Irish to live at home, and rescue them from the necessity of going into exile to save their lives." Here the Abbé Perraud also seems to misapprehend, or else shrinks from uttering the horrible fact, that the object of all British policy in Ireland is now, and ever has been, to make it impossible for the Irish to live at home. In the writings of foreigners, even the most acute and most friendly to Ireland, there is a steady, almost stolid, persistence in assuming that British statesmen, if they only knew how, would hasten to redress the ills of Ireland. For this reason, and for this alone, has the real history of Ireland remained a puzzle and a secret even to the most intelligent inquirers from other countries. They may as well understand at once that the key of the whole mystery is this one fundamental truth—The single policy of England towards Ireland is, as it always has been, to extirpate the Irish nation. This maxim, well borne in mind, everything becomes simple enough.

In 1841 the number of inhabited houses in all Ireland, according to the official census,\* was one million three hundred and twenty-eight thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine. In 1851 it was one million forty-six thousand two hundred and ninety-four. But this decrease between those two periods of the census does not by any means represent the actual amount of destruction, because from 1841 (the census year) till 1845 the population had been rapidly increasing (as has been observed in a former chapter). When the "famine" commenced, in 1846, we may fairly assume that the inhabited houses amounted to one million and a half; the decrease, then, in 1851, must be set down at almost *half a million* of houses or cabins, giving shelter on an average to five human beings each. These figures are in themselves sufficient

\* See Thom's *Official Almanac and Directory*, 1861.

to give a ghastly idea of the agony of Ireland, and of the too cruel efficiency of the methods so steadily pursued for the extirpation of its native inhabitants. "The Celts were gone," or rapidly going; and this not the result of emigration, as we have seen, but of mere hunger and hardship. The system, and the motives and operation of the system, became at length so clear and plain that Mr. Isaac Butt, a Protestant barrister (O'Connell's opponent in the famous Corporation Debate upon Repeal), published some years later (1856) a work entitled, *A Plea for the Celtic Race*, urging the impolicy, even in the interest of England, of entirely abolishing the whole breed.\*

It is no way surprising, then, to find that the number of persons in all Ireland qualified to vote for county representatives in Parliament, had dwindled down, on January 1, 1850, to considerably less than one thousand for each county, or twenty-seven thousand one hundred and eighty for the thirty-two counties. The great County of Mayo had but two hundred electors, and these almost all landed proprietors. This cannot be surprising to those who have followed the narrative of that long, wasting war, systematically made on the race of small farmers, first by the abolition of the forty-shilling franchise, then by the "consolidation" of farms; by the frequent ejectment Acts; by the stimulus given to extermination

\* We give two suggestive passages from this performance:—"Whatever may be the difficulties that attend the discussion of the question, any man who can contribute ever so little to its investigation, does some service to his country. To say that the land question is the most important part of all Irish public questions, but feebly expresses its magnitude. It would be nearer the truth to say that it forms the whole. While the 'unsatisfactory relations' between the owners and occupiers of the soil continue, there can never be peace or prosperity in the land. Let these relations be placed on a satisfactory basis, and all other questions will very soon adjust themselves. The question, however, is not exclusively of Irish interest. It is true that, so far as Ireland is concerned, it involves nothing less than the continued existence in their own land of the old Irish race. But in the face of troubles which are gathering and darkening over Europe, it is not too much to say that the continuance of England's greatness may depend upon her being able to satisfy and conciliate that race in their native land.

"English statesmen must ask themselves whether the British Empire can afford to lose the hardy and bold population, a portion of which every month is now transferring itself to the other side of the Atlantic. They must seriously reflect on the danger which arises from sending a hostile and embittered Irish colony to the American continent. All the emigrants who are now leaving the country carry with them the most determined hatred of British power. Those whom they leave behind sympathize in their feelings, and whenever the opportunity occurs, the Irish abroad and a large portion of the Irish at home will be ready to aid any attempt that can strike a blow at that power."



and emigration; finally, by the Poor laws and the famine.

The condition of the county representation, therefore, had become so scandalous that Ministers in 1850 judged it needful to extend, somehow or other, the numbers qualified to vote. But here arose a difficulty, there were no more freeholders. That class had been too effectually shaken loose from the soil, impoverished, and extirpated. Many thousands of them who had escaped death were by this time digging canals and railways in America. It was evident that nothing like an apparently adequate representation could be looked for, based upon the old and respectable condition of a freehold estate in land. But it occurred to Lord John Russell to found the franchise upon the *poor rates*; thus connecting this ancient privilege of freemen with the odious and destructive system of public pauperism which had been forced upon the island against its will, and had been corroding its people so fatally ever since.

Accordingly, a bill was introduced to "amend" the representation both in counties and in boroughs. The *Irish Official Directory* thus shortly states the facts:—

"The number of electors under the Reform Act was, in 1832, ninety-eight thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven; on January 1, 1850, the constituency had diminished to sixty-one thousand and thirty-six; twenty-seven thousand one hundred and eighty in the counties, and thirty-three thousand eight hundred and fifty-six in the cities and boroughs. The Act 13th and 14th Vic., chap. 69, was passed in 1850, to amend the representation; and in addition to those persons previously qualified to register and vote in county elections, occupiers of tenements *rated in the last poor rate* at a net annual value of £12 and upwards, are entitled to vote in elections for counties, subject to registration, in accordance with the Act, and to certain limitations therein; also owners of certain estates of the rated net annual value of £5. But no persons are to be entitled to vote in counties in respect of tenements in virtue of which they may be entitled to vote in boroughs. In boroughs, occupiers *rated in the last poor rate* at £8 and upwards are entitled to vote, subject to registration and certain limitations in the Act. By the 13th and 14th Vic., chap. 68, the polling at contested elections is to continue in counties for two days only, and in cities and boroughs for one day only; the re-

turning officer is to provide booths, so that not more than six hundred voters shall poll at each booth for a county, and two hundred for a city or borough. The number of electors registered under the new Act, on January 1, 1851, was one hundred and sixty-three thousand five hundred and forty-six, being one hundred and thirty-five thousand two hundred and forty-five in the counties, and twenty-eight thousand three hundred and one in the cities and boroughs.

This enlargement of the electoral basis was undoubtedly a seeming advantage, assuming that the Irish representation in a British Parliament is a thing desirable. But it was not in the nature of the Whigs, nor, indeed, of the Tories, to concede to Ireland even an apparent advantage, and not accompany the "boon" with an outrage. Lord John Russell flung us the Franchise Act with one hand, and with the other a new Coercion law and the "Ecclesiastical Titles Act." As for the former, it was only the usual atrocity, this time under the title of an "Act for the better Prevention of Crime and Outrage in Ireland;" with the customary power to proclaim districts, to quarter police on them, to search for arms, to keep everybody at home after sunset, and to transport delinquents. There was nothing uncommon in this, and the uncommon and exceptional thing for Irishmen would have been to find themselves living under the civil laws of the land. But the other measure (Ecclesiastical Titles bill) needs further notice.

In the summer of this year, 1850, arrived in England a most startling document; nothing less than a Papal Brief, direct from Rome, directing the English Catholic "Vicars Apostolic"—who were bishops, in fact, possessing all episcopal jurisdiction—to assume the true titles of their Sees, as Bishop of Hexham, Bishop of Birmingham, and so forth; and further appointing the illustrious Doctor Wiseman a Cardinal and first Archbishop of Westminster. The soil of Protestant England was thus mapped out by a foreign prince into separate governments (dioceses), and placed under the control of certain Popish priests, in utter disdain of the exclusive rights of the Anglican Church, and of the Queen as its Pope and head. Here was papal aggression! Immediately arose a vehement "No-Popery" excitement throughout England. It is true that the Pope herein exercised the undoubted jurisdiction which he possessed in things spiritual over his Church, and which he had long notoriously exercised under other names and forms.



Still, it was against the "law"—that is, against some of the old penal laws yet unrepealed, but always violated—to introduce into Great Britain or Ireland any Papal Bull, Brief, Rescript, or writing whatsoever. And then the high tone assumed (necessarily) by the Pope in his Brief, and by Cardinal Wiseman in promulgating it, appeared to the enlightened mind of Protestant England to amount to nothing less than Jezebel herself, formally entering in and taking possession.

At once there was a shout of alarm and wrath, from all the ends of England and Scotland, to which the Irish Orangemen, of course, contributed their best vociferation. County meetings were held all over England, to denounce this audacious "Papal aggression;" and platforms, pulpits, and press rung for months with the old and well-worn denunciations against Jezebel, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the whole mystery of iniquity generally. Lord John Russell—a statesman who hated Catholics and their religion with all the venom of his small, shrivelled, and spiteful soul, and who was distressed, besides, by the late concession of franchise to certain Catholics in Ireland—Lord John Russell, though Prime Minister of the Queen, was not above the paltry task of stimulating this ignoble rage. He selected the 4th of November, the day before the anniversary of the "Gunpowder Plot," to publish in the newspapers a letter to the Bishop of Durham, expressing alarm and indignation, "but less alarm than indignation," at the daring invasion of England by the Pope of Rome; enlarging upon the enormity of Catholic doctrines, and terming Catholic worship "superstitious mummary." His lordship, however, though he saw great cause for apprehension, assured the bishop that the noble Protestant State of England should never, never be yielded up into the hands of a foreign priest. Next day was the fifth, when Guy Fawkes is always burned in effigy. This time there was in many towns of England, and especially in London, an astonishing uproar of "No Popery" zeal. Multitudinous processions celebrated the occasion, orators spouted out of *Fox's Martyrs* (taking care to say nothing of the martyrs that Protestants had made), and the ignorant masses were inflamed to madness by pictures of the racks and pincers which they were assured were shortly to be introduced into England, under the new Papal Bull. Instead of Guy Fawkes, they burned effigies of the Pope, of the Virgin, of Cardinal Wiseman, and swore deep oaths, under the influence of deep potations,

that they would all die, with the Bible on their bosoms, before they would submit to the tyranny of the Propaganda and the pincers of the Inquisition. It would have been an insane action, on the part of any Catholic priest, to allow himself to be seen in the streets upon that evening.

The conclusion of this affair of "Papal aggression" belongs to the following year, 1851; but we may here anticipate a little. Lord John Russell lost no time in availing himself of the stupid fanaticism of his countrymen. Parliament met again in February, 1851. He made the chief feature in the Queen's speech this very affair of the Pope's Bull, and made her earnestly recommend to Parliament efficient action upon so important a subject. A bill was at once introduced by his lordship, absolutely prohibiting the assumption of the title of any existing See, or of any title whatsoever, from *any place* in the United Kingdom, under a penalty of £100 for each such offence. This was an extension of the provisions of the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, which imposed the same penalty on the assumption of the title to any *existing* See only. That prohibition in Ireland, and the penalty attached to it, had been always entirely neglected and ignored by the Catholic hierarchy, and the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh signed himself Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, just as the other one did. In the new ecclesiastical division of England, however, care had been taken to avoid giving to Catholic bishops the precise titles of Protestant Sees—except in one instance—and therefore it became necessary for the legislators against Papal aggression to extend the prohibition and penalty to all territorial titles whatsoever, derived from any place in the three kingdoms.

The new bill, which was intended to be highly stringent and menacing—a new and formidable bulwark to the Reformation in England—was only on its passage when Lord John Russell's Government went out, and the Tories, under Lord Derby, came in. It made no difference in this case. The bill to repress "Papal aggression" was not only taken up by the new administration, but was eventually passed with amendments extending the penalty to the introduction of *any* document or rescript from Rome, as well as the one lately arrived, and further empowering and inviting any common informer to prosecute. The bill was carried through all its stages by immense majorities, English Whigs and English



Tories being once more an unit on this vital matter; and thereafter it was not only to be illegal for the Archbishop of Westminster to sign himself Archbishop of Westminster, but for the Archbishop of Armagh to take the title of his undoubted office, under the penalty of £100 for each offence.

On the passage of this bill it was really believed by ignorant Protestants that a new and mighty bulwark had been set up against the Pope, and that the "Reformation" was at length secured. Much to the surprise of these ignorant Protestants, no notice whatever was taken of the new law by English bishops or by Irish bishops. Indeed, Doctor MacHale, the bold Archbishop of Tuam, who has the spirit of a patriot and, if need be, of a martyr, took an early occasion of publicly violating the new law, by reading in his cathedral the actual rescript of the Pope, and inviting any informer or priest-hunter, who might wish to earn a hundred pounds, to institute a prosecution against him. The law was never executed in a single instance. Doctor Newman signed his name in public documents as Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and the Archbishop of Armagh continued to style himself Primate of all Ireland. The "Law" stands on record upon the scandalous chronicle of English legislation as a mere impotent example of No-Popery spite.

Why was this law, passed by immense majorities, and with every appearance of determination, never enforced in a single case? Why were not the Catholic bishops prosecuted under its provisions? The answer is too obvious—the Irish Catholic bishops have been so useful to the British Government, ever since the Union, in preserving the "peace of the country"—that is, its perpetual subjugation to England—that it was not safe to make enemies of them. On this subject we may trust the Rev. Father Perraud, who thus expresses himself in his able work on Ireland.\* "It is useless to conceal the fact: it is not the regiments encamped in Ireland; it is not the militia of twelve thousand *peelers* distributed over the whole of the surface of the land, which prevents revolt and preserves the peace. During a long period, especially in the last century, the excess of misery to which Ireland was reduced had multiplied, even in the most Catholic counties, the *secret societies* of the peasantry. At this very moment, it is said, America is making great efforts to entice patriotic young men into those

obscure Associations in which men *swear hatred to governments*, in which are prepared the conspiracies against *public institutions*, in which are silently organized social wars. . . . But who have ever been so energetic in resistance to secret societies as the Irish episcopacy? Who have denounced these *illegal Associations* with the most persevering, powerful, and formidable condemnation? On more than one occasion the bishops have even hazarded their popularity in this way. They could at a signal have armed a million combatants against a persecuting government; and that signal they refused to give."

Passing over the various singular misstatements of the reverend writer—that secret societies in Ireland swear hatred to governments in general, instead of the English Government *alone*—that they conspire against "public institutions" generally, instead of the institutions of famine and packed juries, and the rest of our British institutions—and that they organize "social war," instead of war against the English troops,—passing over these errors, one thing is, at least, evident from the pages of the *Père Perraud*—that the Catholic bishops take credit to themselves for preserving British institutions and British government in Ireland.\* It is possible that they are entitled to this credit, such as it is. And herein lies the reason why they were never prosecuted under the "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill." The English Government did not enforce its own law, because it dared not.†

The Parliamentary session of 1850 is further notable as the occasion of a discussion upon the Orange outrage at Dolly's Brac, near Castlewella, in the County Down. The transaction had taken place in the July of the year before, at the usual celebration of the Orange anniversary. It happened in this manner:—The Orangemen of various districts of that region had assembled, marching by various routes, at the splendid demesne called Tollymore Park, the seat of the Earl of Roden, one of the highest dignitaries of their order. One of the parties had marched through an exclusively Catholic district, and in the true spirit of

\* M. Perraud had made two visits to Ireland in order to collect material for his valuable work; had communicated freely with the Catholic bishops; and must be supposed to speak *for them* in claiming merit for them on account of their loyal efforts.

† It is observable that Father Perraud speaks of the bishops as denouncing "illegal Associations." But there is no society in Ireland so *illegal* as the Catholic Episcopacy. No White-Boy, Young Irelander, or "Fenian," ever more deliberately broke the law than those bishops habitually do in taking the title of their Sees, and in reading rescripts from Rome.

\* *Etudes sur l'Irlande contemporaine.* Par le R. P. Adolphe Perraud. Paris, 1862.



the anniversary had insulted the peaceable people with the flaunting of their Orange banners and lilies, and by playing before the poor cabins the tune of "Croppies Lie Down."\* After the muster at Tollymore Park, a dinner, and some drink, and a speech from Lord Roden concerning the Mystery of Iniquity and the duty of all good Protestants—if they were to be martyred for their faith—at least to die with their Bibles clasped to their bosoms, it was determined to march back by way of Dolly's Brae. One Beers, a very ignorant Orange magistrate, accompanied them. Violent proceedings were expected to occur upon the passage by Dolly's Brae, and might have been prevented by

\* The usual Orange style is thus described by one who knew the North of Ireland well:—"In some districts of that country Protestants are the majority of the people; the old policy of the "Government" has been to arm the Protestants and disarm the Catholics. The magistrates at all sessions are Orangemen or high British loyalists. In those districts, therefore, Catholics lead the lives of dogs—lie down in fear and rise up with foreboding; their worship is insulted, and their very funerals are made an occasion of riot. One of the July anniversaries comes round—the days of Aughrim and the Boyne; the pious Evangelicals must celebrate those disastrous but hard fought battles where William of Nassau, with his army of French Huguenots, Danes, and Dutchmen, overthrew the power of Ireland, and made the noble old Celtic race hewers of wood and drawers of water even unto this day. Lodges assemble at some central point, with drums and fifes playing the 'Protestant Boys.' At the rendezvous are the Grand Masters with their sashes and aprons—a beautiful show. Procession formed, they walk in Lodges, each with its banner of orange or purple and garlands of orange lilies borne high on poles. Most have arms, yeomanry muskets or pistols, or ancient swords whetted for the occasion. They arrive at some other town or village, dine in the public-houses, drink the 'glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William,' and 'To Hell with the Pope;' re-form their procession after dinner, and then comes the time for Protestant action. They march through a Papist townland: at every house they stop and play 'Croppies lie down!' and the 'Boyne Water,' firing a few shots over the house at the same time. The doors are shut—the family in terror—the father standing on the floor with knitted brows and teeth clenched through the nether lip, grasping a pitchfork (for the police long since found out and took away his gun). Bitter memories of the feuds of ages darken his soul. Outside, with taunting music and brutal jests and laughter, stand in their ranks the Protestant communicants. The old grandmother can endure no longer: she rushes out, with gray hair streaming, and kneels on the road before them, she clasps her old thin hands and curses them in the name of God and his Holy Mother. Loud laughs are the answer, and a shot or two over the house or in through the window. The old crone, in frantic exasperation, takes up a stone and hurls it with feeble hand against the insulting crew. There; the first assault is committed; everything is lawful now: smash go the unglazed windows and their frames; zealous Protestants rush into the house raging; the man is shot down at his own threshold, the cabin is wrecked, and the procession, playing 'Croppies lie down,' proceeds to another Popish den.

"So the Reformation is vindicated. The names of Ballyvarly and Tullycrier will rise to the lips of many a man who reads this description."

Lord Roden and other magistrates present at the banquet, if they had used their influence to prevent the march by that particular road; but it was thought advisable to give the Papists a lesson, and the Lodges started for Dolly's Brae. It appeared, on the subsequent investigation, that so strong was the reason to apprehend disturbance as to induce some magistrates to send forward a strong force of police. On the arrival of the Orangemen in the townland, it was found that most of the inhabitants were gathered near the roadside, whether from mutual protection or for active resistance to the Orange march in that direction, did not clearly appear; but the latter motive was unlikely, as the Catholics were quite unarmed, save with a few scythes and hayforks. An immediate collision took place, of course. The chief of police led his men at once into the scene of disorder; ascertaining to his own satisfaction, as usual, that the Catholics were solely to blame, and were the atrocious aggressors, he directed all the efforts of his force against them. In short, by the joint operations of the armed Orangemen and the armed police, the unarmed Papists were victoriously defeated; several corpses were left upon the field, and most of the houses were burned or wrecked.

Such was the day of Dolly's Brae. A lawyer was sent down from Dublin as a "Commissioner," on the usual pretence of examining into the facts and collecting the evidence; and it appears that his report was not so grossly partial as had been expected; for Lord Clarendon could not avoid the plain necessity of dismissing from the Commission of the Peace both Lord Roden and Beers. It was on this report that the debate arose in Parliament, and many severe judgments were expressed of the conduct of the Irish Government in encouraging and arming such a banditti as the Orangemen. Lord Clarendon, who attended in his place in the House of Peers upon this occasion, defended his proceedings as he best could; and, in particular, he most emphatically denied that, in 1848, he had furnished arms to Orange Lodges. He said that, in fact, a certain Captain Kennedy (at the time of the debate serving in India) had given money out of his own pocket to provide arms for Lodges; but he (Lord Clarendon) was quite innocent of any such proceedings. It is scarcely necessary to say that nobody believed his lordship. What had been charged was, that not money, but *arms*, had been sent from Dublin Castle to Belfast for distribution



amongst Orangemen; and, besides, if the money given by Captain Kennedy came, in fact, out of the Secret Service Fund, Lord Clarendon, as the distributor of that fund in Ireland, would have felt it his right and his duty to deny the fact when charged. It is an official necessity; because, otherwise, there would be nothing secret nor sacred in secret service money.

It only remains to be mentioned, that no person was ever brought to justice for the predetermined massacre of Dolly's Brae.

At this point—the middle of the current century—the present history closes. It leaves in full operation the whole system of British rule in Ireland. Every department of Irish life was brought under complete subordination to English interests; and the arrangements seemed to be perfect for preventing national aspirations or national interests in Ireland from ever again becoming a disturbing element in the course of imperial policy. The Celtic population was securely put in the way of steady diminution.\* The famine was past, and the people were continually called on by the smooth-spoken Viceroy to rejoice in the return of prosperity; yet there was still a multitudinous rush to the sea, in order to escape from such prosperity. The emigration from Ireland in 1851 amounted to two hundred and fifty-seven thousand three hundred and seventy-two. The number of paupers relieved in the poorhouses in 1850 was eight hundred and five thousand seven hundred and two, without counting nearly four hundred thousand who were receiving "outdoor relief." No attempt had been made to secure to the tenant, by just laws, any right whatsoever in the improvements he might make on his farm. Extermination of peasantry was not only the practice but the fashion; and ruthless consolidation of farms had come to be thought the criterion of high intelligence, and even philanthropy, in an Irish proprietor, because it proved that he had studied the "Devon Commission" report, and appreciated the conclusions of the Commissioners.

In the same year, 1850, the Government was holding in its own hands, by means of the savings banks, the earnings and savings of poor Irish people, to the amount of £1,291,798; so that every industrious artizan and careful maid-servant who had made a deposit, was directly interested, to the amount of such a deposit, in maintaining what is called "the peace of the country"—that is to say, submit-

ting implicitly to the British system, and influencing others to submit.

The Established Church and the police were flourishing; the Orangemen were as insolent and ferocious as they had ever been; and the Coercion Act (for suppression of "crime and outrage") was always ready in the Castle, to be launched at a moment's warning against any barony or county in the land. Yet the truth is, that Ireland was at that time remarkably free from crimes and outrages (except those perpetrated against her people); and it is instructive to remark, that crimes and outrages were at the same time steadily on the increase in England and Scotland. A speech in Parliament, of Lord John Russell, contains a wonderful revelation upon this point.\* His lordship stated, that in one year (1857) the *convictions* in Great Britain were, for "shooting, stabbing, and wounding," two hundred and eight; for highway robbery, three hundred and seventy-eight; for burglary and housebreaking, one thousand and thirty-four; for forgery, one hundred and eighty-four; a catalogue which could by no means be matched in Ireland. However, those English and Scotch crimes and outrages were not done in assertion of public right or resistance of public wrong; that is to say, they were real crimes and outrages; they did not alarm the higher classes; and had seldom any social, political, or religious character. Therefore, it never entered into the mind of Government or Parliament to apply their "Crime and Outrage Act" to England or Scotland. In other words, the series of coercion laws for Ireland have always been proposed and passed under a false pretence; they are not to prevent crime, but to keep the people for ever helpless in the hands of their mortal enemies. They are not measures for reformation of society, but engines and arms for perpetuation of British rule in Ireland.

While our country was so rapidly sinking to beggary, and diminishing in population, it may be useful to cast a glance at the progress of the other island. This cannot be done better than by quoting a passage from Alison (chap. 56), in which he gives a general view of English affairs during a period of four years: "From 1848," he says, "to 1853, the effects of free-trade were displayed, undisturbed by any other or counteracting influences. *Plenty had again returned*, and spread its sunshine over the land. The harvest of 1847 had been so favourable that, at Lord John Russell's suggestion, a public thanks-

\* It is now (1868) considerably under six millions.

\* It is cited by Sir Archibald Alison, in chapter 56 of his *History*.



giving was offered up for it;\* and this blessing continued unabated in a sensible degree throughout the period." The same historian proceeds to give statements exhibiting the enormous development of English commerce and wealth during the same period of four years, by reason of the gold discoveries in California and in Australia. But nothing of all that prosperity is for Ireland. Having scarcely any manufactures, she has no commerce, except her fatal commerce with England, under that "free-trade" which cheapens all which she has to sell, and makes dearer to that precise amount everything which she is forced to buy.

It may, therefore, be affirmed that in or about the year 1850, Ireland became thoroughly subjugated, without almost a hope of escape. Everything was fitted to the hand of her enemy, and that enemy made most unrelenting use of the advantage.

The Catholic bishops counselled obedience and submission; the formidable kind of "agitation" devised by O'Connell had become altogether impossible; because in the first place the very material for it (the "surplus population") had been swept off the face of the earth, and besides, the English Government had now so firm a hold of the poor, through "Crime and Outrage Acts," police and poor-laws, that it was more difficult than formerly to move the masses.

Parliamentary efforts, or rather pretences of effort, were made from time to time, to obtain ameliorations of some grievance or other. These pretences of effort, if they really tended to any good for Ireland, were always defeated, or rather, indeed, spurned by Parliament with disdain and insult, as it was always known they would be: and the total result of those Parliamentary movements may be defined as consisting of a few places distributed to rhetorical patriots. Thus, far from the Irish representation in Parliament serving as means of asserting Irish rights or interests, it helps to rivet the chains of our unhappy island, by opening a market overt, where patriots may be purchased (while still vociferating for justice to Ireland), and so silenced for ever.

Whatever has been effected for the good of the Irish people, whether to promote their moral and intellectual culture, or even to aid them in saving their lives, has been done exclusively by themselves. Two wonderful examples of this nature

must be mentioned: *first*, the establishment of the Catholic University; and *second*, the immense fund which has been systematically contributed for some years by Irish people settled in the United States to aid their friends in escaping from British government.

It has already been seen, in the course of this history, what rigorous means were used during the last century to prevent the Catholic people, under the heaviest penalties, from being educated at all; and how the extraordinary eagerness for education on the part of those people had impelled them to seek in foreign schools and universities the instruction which none dared to give them at home—although there were both great risk and enormous expense incurred in these efforts to obtain contraband learning. It was the true English horror of "French principles," about the time of the great French revolution, which caused the penal laws against education to be relaxed; but no measures were taken by the enemy's Government to supply the place of that continental education for many years after; and when at last the "National Schools" were established, and, later still, when the three "Queen's Colleges" were built and endowed, it was found that the National Schools were so constituted as to be extremely un-national, or anti-national, and that the Queen's Colleges were still more adroitly arranged to wean Catholic students both from national sentiment, and from the faith and morals of their Church. Such, at least, was the judgment of the majority of the Irish bishops and clergy; and when we reflect upon the two chairs of history and moral philosophy, which must exist in every university, and on the effect of training up Catholic youth in the British principles upon these subjects, and causing them to regard human life and history from a strictly British point of view, it cannot be matter of wonder if the Catholic hierarchy lifted its voice against the new plans of education imposed on us by a London Parliament. In short, there was a necessity to provide some other and better system for the collegiate education of Catholic youth, and therefore, in the year 1854, pursuant to a recommendation coming from Rome, the Irish bishops formally instituted a free Catholic University, destined, like the Church (whose offspring it was) to subsist only upon the charity of the faithful, and to be completely independent of the State. Yet all this while the wealthy Protestant Corporation of Trinity College was maintained in splendour by estates plundered from

\* The harvest of 1847 was also very abundant in Ireland, and it was one of the deadliest years of famine. The English offered thanksgivings to God for the Irish harvests, and then devoured them.



Catholic monasteries, and the "Queen's Colleges" were kept up at the public cost, to which the Catholics, as tax-payers, of course, had to contribute their full share. There was nothing, indeed, new in all this: they had been long used to maintain schools and churches for others, and to find the means of providing for their own religious services, and instruction also, as best they could.

The Board of the Catholic University of Dublin consists of the four archbishops, and two other prelates for each province. The institution comprises five faculties: those of theology, law, medicine, belles-lettres, and science. Its government is carried on by a committee of archbishops and bishops, meeting once a year. The immediate and ordinary administration is conducted by the "Senate" of the university, consisting of the rector and vice-rector, the secretary, the professors, the superiors of certain institutions dependent on the university, and the Fellows.\* A yearly collection, made in every diocese, provides for the expenses of the foundation. The spirit and zeal with which this great national enterprise has been sustained, form an admirable illustration of the unselfish devotedness of the Irish people to an object which they believe to be good, or, in other words, anti-English. In the year 1859 they had already bestowed freely—and given their blessing along with it—the considerable sum of £80,000 sterling, for promotion of this noble object; and every year, even in the poorest chapels among the mountains of remote parishes, the appeal of the parish priest in favour of an institution blessed by the Pope and the bishops brings forth an offering even from the poorest.

All this great work has been done, it is true, in contravention of the views and policy of the British Government, not only without its help, but under the frown of its displeasure. The Catholic University has no charter of incorporation, and no legal right to confer degrees in arts or laws. In the eyes of the Government, it is but a private Association, tolerated but not recognized, as indeed the Catholic Church itself is.

Another strange and admirable example of the generous zeal of the Irish people in resisting the utter destruction of their race, is seen in the regular and systemized aid furnished by Irish citizens of the United States, to assist their friends and relatives in withdrawing themselves from the domination of England, and establishing themselves in a free country. The

emigration of what is called the "surplus population" of Ireland has been aided and furthered in several ways. The landed proprietors, with a view to facilitate the consolidation of farms, and also to reduce the burden of poor rates in their respective "Unions," have largely contributed to help the emigration of the poor people whom they themselves exterminate; but this is a matter of private arrangement, and no *data* exist for even approximating to the amount supplied from this source. In 1848 the Poor-Law Unions were invited by the Government to co-operate in the movement of deportation, in order to furnish a gratuitous passage to such poor persons as had no other resource than expatriation. But this was to be at the expense of the Irish ratepayers, and was, moreover, to be in strict accordance with the views of the British Government itself. The emigration thus promoted was, therefore, to be almost entirely to the British Colonies, especially Australia. From 1847 to 1859 inclusive, the Unions contributed about £100,000 to the cost of emigration, removing from Ireland about 25,000 persons. But this was a trifle. The great rush of emigrants was to the United States, and the cost of the immense exodus was mainly provided for by the savings of Irish citizens already settled in that republic.

The Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, in their twelfth report, state that they do not believe that "The emigration will be arrested by anything short of a great improvement in the position of the labouring population in Ireland; all those obstacles which in ordinary cases would be opposed to so wholesale an emigration appear, in the case of the Irish, to be smoothed away. The misery which they have for many years endured has destroyed the attachment to their native soil, the numbers who have already emigrated and prospered remove the apprehension of going to a strange and untried country, while the want of means is remedied by the liberal contributions of their relations and friends who have preceded them. The contributions so made, either in the form of prepaid passages or of money sent home, and which are almost exclusively provided by the Irish, were returned to us, as in

1848, upwards of.....	£460,000
1849, " .....	540,000
1850, " .....	957,000
1851, " .....	990,000

And although it is probable that all the money included in these returns is not expended in emigration, yet, as we have reason to know that much is sent home of which these returns show no trace, it seems not unfair to assume that of the

\* *Rules and Regulations.* § 7. The institutions dependent on the Catholic University are those of St. Patrick, St. Lawrence (Harcourt Street), Carmel, and Corpus Christi.



money expended in Irish emigration in each of the last four years a very large proportion was provided from the other side of the Atlantic."

The Abbé Perraud, in his *Etudes sur l'Irlande contemporaine*, says: "From the returns furnished by American bankers, the Emigration Commissioners give the precise amount of these remittances of money; but for North America only. The total for thirteen years (1848-1861) is £11,674,596 sterling. These statistics apply, indeed, to the emigrants from the three kingdoms; but as the Irish are in the immense majority, so it is the Irish who remit the far larger proportion of the money." It must be added, that the reports made up by American bankers can represent only a portion of the remittances from Irish citizens to their friends at home, because much money is sent through other channels, which cannot enter into those returns. On the whole, however, it is evident that the strong natural affection of the Irish for their parents and relatives, and their constant and ardent desire to deliver them from an odious bondage, have in this instance materially served the policy of the British Government, which is, to get rid of the Celtic enemy by any and by all means.

And, for the present, the policy of that Government seems to be eminently successful. The Celtic Irish in Ireland have greatly diminished in numbers, and are still diminishing. Yet there is another aspect of this affair. A vast mass of Irish power and Irish passion has been gathering and growing in the United States, all of it cherishing a mortal hatred of the British Empire, and a fierce thirst of vengeance on their enemies, as well as a loving and generous desire to emancipate their native country from the bitter thralldom of so many ages. From the Celtic Irish on the American continent arises one universal cry of execration against English dominion and English ideas. With independent means, a fair career for industry, and an increased and still increasing acquaintance with the story of their native country, there has grown up in their hearts an intense desire to right the wrongs of centuries, to lift up their kinsfolk and ancient clansmen out of the abject misery in which British policy requires them to be kept, and to see their countrymen in fair and full possession of the lovely land where Providence has placed them. This is a dangerous matter for the British Empire.

For the present, indeed, it may seem that, by the operation of all the well-devised arrangements for getting rid of the Irish people, what used to be called the "Irish difficulty" has become more

manageable; the "Irish enemy," if not wholly destroyed, is at least disarmed and bound. No way of redress is left open except a violent revolution; and for this the people of Ireland and their kinsmen in America only await the opportunity of a war which shall tax the strength of their enemy.

A tabular summary of the financial condition of the country (as furnished by her enemy), up to the year 1852, may fitly close this story. It is to be observed upon these official returns, that we have no means of checking them, because our books are kept in England. Yet one or two remarks are obvious.

Most Irishmen are of opinion that they do not receive value for the charge on account of "Army, Navy, and Ordnance," believing, in fact, that the money would be much better spent in destroying those British services. [*Tabular Summary, see next page.*]

## CONCLUSION.

THE compiler of this continuation of the Abbé MacGeoghegan's *History of Ireland* purposely stops short of the most recent events which have agitated that country, and disquieted and exasperated England. The time for relating the history of those events has not yet arrived. It may be said, however, that a powerful illustration has been thereby given to the fact, that while England is at peace with other powerful nations, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make so much as a serious attempt at a national insurrection, in the face of a government so vigilant and so well prepared.

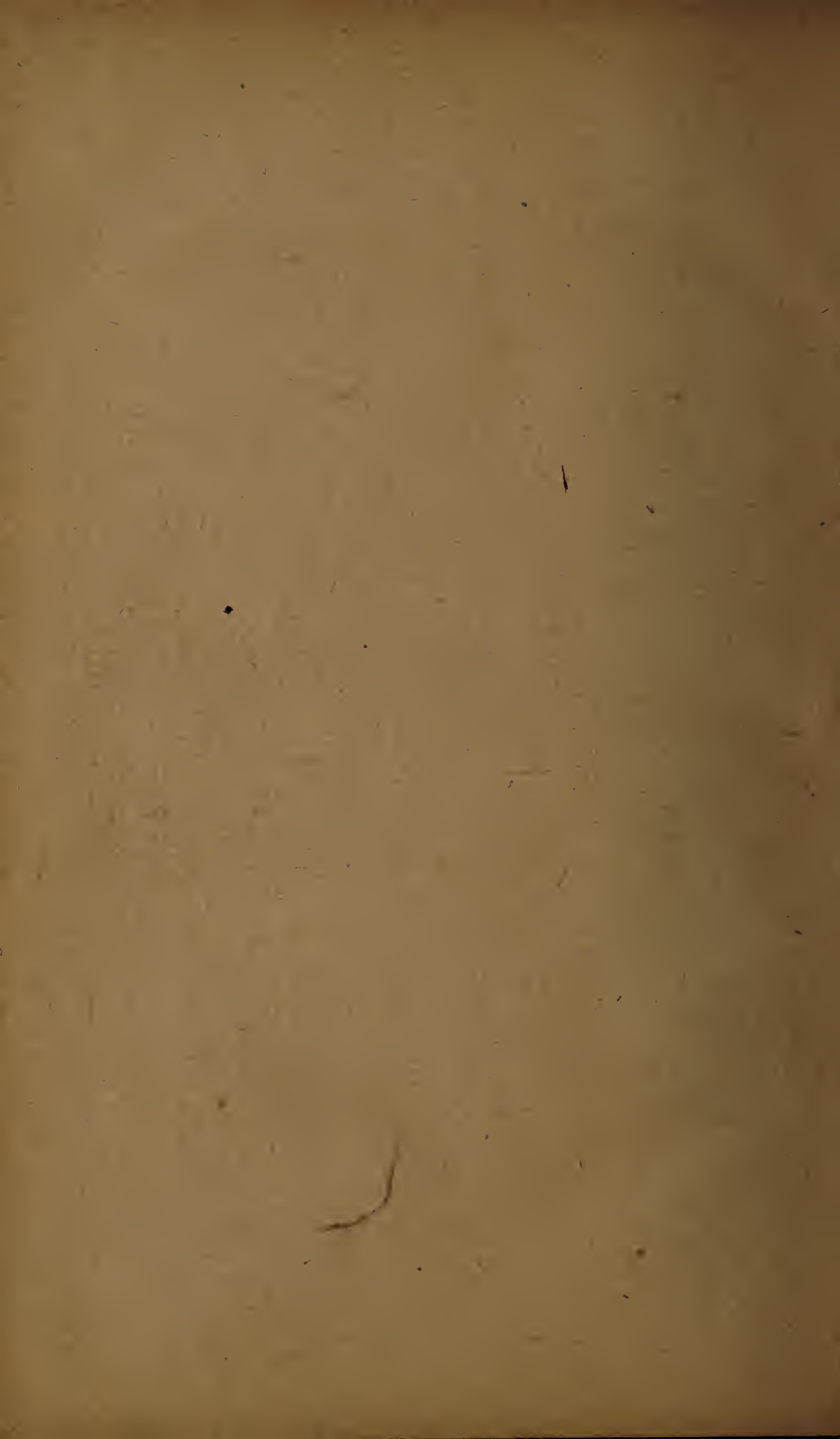
The high patriotic enthusiasm that impelled many brave Irishmen in America to fly across the Atlantic and devote to the rescue of their country that art of war which they had learned chiefly to that end, their experience in training men, the gallantry of the peasants, their extensive secret organizations—all seemed to break and dissolve away in the very hour of highest hope and resolve. All honour be to the men who made the daring effort, and staked their lives upon it. Whatever judgment may be formed of others, *they*, at least, "stood the cast their rashness played," and the best of them are expiating in dungeons the crime of loving their country and striving to serve her—just as Irishmen have generally expiated that offence for many ages. Yet no cause is utterly lost so long as it can inspire heroic devotion. No country is hopelessly vanquished whose sons love her better than their lives.



ACCOUNT of the INCOME and EXPENDITURE of IRELAND, in the Years ending 5th January, from 1847 to 1852, inclusive; showing the whole of the Ways and Means provided within the same period, together with the application thereof.—[*House of Commons Papers*, No. 523, 1849; No. 600, 1850; No. 477, 1851; No. 504, 1852.]

INCOME.	1847.		1848.		1849.		1850.		1851.		1852.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Net Payments into the Exchequer of the following several Duties or Revenues, viz:—												
Customs, . . . . .	2,258,043	7 9	2,009,132	10 5	2,069,772	16 11	1,941,122	1 5	1,827,289	9 10	1,854,268	5 7
Excise, . . . . .	1,467,060	4 5	1,152,931	12 1	1,321,914	19 9	1,231,548	8 3	1,312,122	15 10	1,348,911	6 5
Stamps, . . . . .	573,766	10 4	567,996	9 1	532,924	8 6	502,072	19 1	462,691	1 11	451,534	5 11
Postage, . . . . .	29,000	0 0	59,000	0 0	39,000	0 0	26,000	0 0	—	—	5,000	0 0
Crown Lands, . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poundage Fee, Pells Fee, Treasury Fees, Hospital Fees, and Casualties, . . . . .	6,062	5 4	5,698	18 4	4,835	1 6	6,632	17 1	5,744	2 7	8,999	11 10
Total Ordinary Revenue, . . . . .	4,333,932	7 10	3,794,759	9 11	3,968,447	6 8	3,707,376	5 10	3,607,847	19 2	3,668,713	9 9
Moneys remaining in the Exchequer at the commencement of the year, . . . . .	791,504	8 7½	702,151	3 10½	834,453	7 11½	815,371	13 9½	1,026,990	8 10½	621,891	8 3½
Other Receipts:—												
Repayment of Money advanced for Public Works and other Public objects, . . . . .	352,641	17 2	484,924	5 1	304,927	9 0	621,155	6 11	480,741	16 3	327,498	11 1½
Moneys Repaid by Public Accountants, and other Miscellaneous Payments, . . . . .	5,887	19 0	46,160	5 0	2,000	16 9	3,928	3 3	6,063	5 5	4,469	16 6
Total Income, . . . . .	5,483,966	12 7½	5,027,995	3 10½	5,109,829	0 4½	5,147,831	9 9½	5,121,643	9 8½	4,622,573	5 8
EXPENDITURE.												
Dividends, Interest, and Management of Public Funded Debt, payable in Ireland, . . . . .	1,315,550	3 10	1,347,611	17 2	1,391,586	14 7	1,386,101	1 2	1,373,222	4 0	1,394,097	17 1
Other Payments out of the Consolidated Fund, . . . . .	902,855	15 0	849,082	4 8	949,957	12 4	939,321	18 10	909,836	1 0	854,272	7 2
Total Payments out of the Consolidated Fund, . . . . .	2,218,405	18 10	2,196,694	1 10	2,341,544	6 11	2,325,423	0 0	2,283,058	5 0	2,248,370	4 3
Payments on account of Grants of Parliaments, viz:—												
Army, . . . . .	1,143,980	0 0	910,000	0 0	625,000	0 0	626,000	0 0	785,000	0 0	585,000	0 0
Navy, . . . . .	3,940	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ordnance, . . . . .	105,000	0 0	91,850	0 0	31,400	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous, . . . . .	468,463	13 6	642,640	12 3	554,216	13 9	565,903	11 7	664,049	3 1	611,382	4 8
Other Payments:—												
Money Advanced out of the Consolidated Fund for Public objects, . . . . .	790,214	3 5	302,022	17 6	695,738	9 7	554,336	14 6	728,272	1 2	300,493	7 2
Total Expenditure, . . . . .	4,730,003	15 9	4,143,207	11 7	4,247,899	10 3	4,071,663	6 1	4,460,379	9 3	3,745,245	16 1
Application of the Ways and Means provided:—												
Applied to the Redemption of Exchequer Bills, per Act 57 Geo. III., cap. 48 (Deficiency Bills), . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sums remitted through the Excise in Ireland to the Exchequer in England, . . . . .	51,811	13 0	50,334	4 4	46,557	16 4	49,177	14 10	39,372	12 2	101,888	11 6
Money remaining in Exchequer at end of year, . . . . .	4,781,815	8 9	4,193,541	15 11	4,294,457	6 7	4,120,841	0 11	4,499,752	1 5	3,847,134	7 7
	702,151	3 10½	834,453	7 11½	815,371	13 9½	1,026,990	8 10½	621,891	8 3½	775,438	18 1
TOTAL, . . . . .	5,483,966	12 7½	5,027,995	3 10½	5,109,829	0 4½	5,147,831	9 9½	5,121,643	9 8½	4,622,573	5 8







## APPENDIX No. I.

### THE ARTICLES OF UNION.

**RESOLVED**, 1. That in order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British Empire, it will be advisable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as may be established by the Acts of the respective Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

*Resolved*, 2. That for the purpose of establishing an Union upon the basis stated in the resolution of the two Houses of Parliament of Great Britain, communicated by His Majesty's command in the message sent to this House by his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant, it would be fit to propose as the first article of Union, that the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall upon the first day of January, which shall be in the year of Our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and one, and for ever after, be united in one kingdom, by the name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and that the royal style and titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdom and its dependencies, and also the ensigns, armorial flags, and banners thereof, shall be such as His Majesty by his royal proclamation, under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, shall be pleased to appoint.

*Resolved*, 3. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the succession to the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdom, and of the dominions thereunto belonging, shall continue limited and settled in the same manner as the succession to the Imperial Crown of the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

*Resolved*, 4. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the said United Kingdom be represented in one and the same Parliament, to be styled the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

*Resolved*, 5. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the charge arising from the payment of the interest and sinking fund, for the reduction of the principal of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively.

That for the space of twenty years after the Union shall take place, the contribution of Great Britain and Ireland respectively, towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom in each year, shall be defrayed in the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain and two parts for Ireland, that at the expiration of the said twenty years the future expenditure of the United Kingdom, other than the interest and charges of the debt to which either country shall be separately liable, shall be defrayed in such proportion as the said United Parliament shall deem just and reasonable, upon a comparison of the real value of the exports and imports of the respective countries, upon an average of the three years next preceding the period of revision, or on a comparison of the value of the quantities of the following articles consumed within the respective countries, on a similar aver-

age, viz., beer, spirits, sugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt; or according to the aggregate proportion resulting from both these considerations combined, or on a comparison of the amount of income in each country, estimated from the produce for the same periods of a general tax, if such shall have been imposed on the same descriptions of income in both countries, and that the Parliament of the United Kingdoms shall afterwards proceed in like manner, to revise and fix the said proportions according to the same rules or any of them, at periods not more distant than twenty years, nor less than seven years from each other, unless previous to any such period the United Parliament shall have declared, as hereinafter provided, that the general expenses of the empire shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes, imposed on the like articles in both countries.

*Resolved*, 6. That for defraying the said expenses, according to the rules above laid down, the revenues of Ireland shall hereafter constitute a consolidated fund, upon which charges equal to the interest of the debt and sinking fund shall, in the first instance, be charged, and the remainder shall be applied towards defraying the proportion of the general expense of the United Kingdom to which Ireland may be liable in each year.

That the proportion of contribution to which Great Britain and Ireland will by these articles be liable, shall be raised by such taxes in each kingdom respectively as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall from time to time deem fit, provided always, that in regulating the taxes in each country by which their respective proportion shall be levied, no article in Ireland shall be liable to be taxed to any amount exceeding that which will be thereafter payable in England on the like articles.

*Resolved*, 7. That if at the end of any year any surplus shall accrue from the revenues of Ireland, after defraying the interest, sinking fund, and proportioned contribution, and separate charges to which the said country is liable, either taxes shall be taken off to the amount of such surplus, or the surplus shall be applied by the United Parliament to local purposes in Ireland, or to make good any deficiency which may arise in her revenues in time of peace, or invested by the commissioners of the national debt of Ireland in the funds, to accumulate for the benefit of Ireland, at compound interest, in case of contribution in time of war. *Provided*, The surplus so to accumulate shall at no future period be suffered to exceed the sum of five millions.

*Resolved*, 8. That all monies hereafter to be raised by loan, in peace or war, for the service of the United Kingdom by the Parliament thereof, shall be considered to be a joint debt, and the charges thereof shall be borne by the respective countries in the proportion of their respective contributions. *Provided*, That if at any time in raising the respective contributions hereby fixed for each kingdom, the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall judge it fit to raise a greater proportion of such respective contributions in one kingdom within the year than in the other, or to set apart a greater proportion of sinking fund for the liquidation of the whole, or any part of the loan raised on account of the one country than that raised on account of the other country, then such part of the said loan for the



liquidation of which different provisions have been made for the respective countries, shall be kept distinct, and shall be borne by each separately, and only that part of the said loan be deemed joint and common, for the reduction of which the respective countries shall have made provision in the proportion of their respective contributions.

*Resolved*, 9. That if at any future day the separate debt of each kingdom respectively shall have been liquidated, or the values of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund), shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each kingdom respectively, or where the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion, shall not exceed one hundredth part of the said value; and if it shall appear to the United Parliament, that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future general expense of the United Kingdom, it shall be competent to the said United Parliament to declare, that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth from time to time, as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand, that from the period of such declaration, it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future general expenses, according to any of the rules hereinbefore provided.

*Provided, nevertheless*, That the interest or charges which may remain on account of any part of the separate debt with which either country is chargeable, and which shall not be liquidated or consolidated proportionately as above, shall, until extinguished, continue to be defrayed by separate taxes in each country.

*Resolved*, 10. That a sum not less than the sum which has been granted by the Parliament of Ireland, on the average of six years, as premiums for the internal encouragement of agriculture or manufacture, or for the maintaining institutions for pious and charitable purposes, shall be applied for the period of twenty years after the Union to such local purposes, in such manner as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall direct.

*Resolved*, 11. That from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all public revenue arising from the territorial dependencies of the United Kingdom shall be applied to the general expenditure of the empire, in the proportions of the respective contributions of the two countries.

*Resolved*, 12. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose that . . . . . Lords spiritual of Ireland, and . . . . . Lords temporal of Ireland, shall be the number to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Lords of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and one hundred commoners (two for each county of Ireland, two for the City of Cork, one for the University of Trinity College, and one for each of the thirty-one most considerable cities, towns, and boroughs) be the number to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons in the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

*Resolved*, 13. That such Acts as shall be passed in the Parliament of Ireland previous to the Union to regulate the mode by which the Lords spiritual and temporal and the Commons to serve in the Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Ireland, shall be summoned or returned to the said Parliament, shall be considered as forming part of the Treaty of Union, and shall be incor-

porated in the Act of the respective Parliaments, by which the said Union shall be ratified and established.

*Resolved*, 14. That all questions touching the election of members to sit on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, shall be heard and decided in the same manner as questions touching such elections in Great Britain now are, or at any time hereafter shall by law be heard and decided, subject nevertheless to such particular regulations in respect of Ireland, as from local circumstances the Parliament of the said United Kingdom may from time to time deem expedient.

*Resolved*, 15. That the qualifications in respect of property of the members elected on the part of Ireland to sit in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, shall be respectively the same as are now provided by law, in cases of elections for counties, and cities, and boroughs respectively, in that part of Great Britain called England, unless any other provision shall hereafter be made in that respect by Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

*Resolved*, 16. That when His Majesty, his heirs, or successors, shall declare his, her, or their pleasure, for holding the first or any subsequent Parliament of the United Kingdom, a proclamation shall issue under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, to cause the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons who are to serve in the Parliament thereof on the part of Ireland, to be returned in such manner as by any Act of this present session of the Parliament of Ireland shall be provided; and that the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of Great Britain shall together with the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons so returned as aforesaid, on the part of Ireland, constitute the two Houses of Parliament of the United Kingdom.

*Resolved*, 17. That if His Majesty on or before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, on which day the Union is to take place, shall declare, under the Great Seal of Great Britain, that it is expedient that the Lords and Commons of the present Parliament of Great Britain should be members of the respective Houses of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Great Britain, then the said Lords and Commons of the present Parliament of Great Britain shall accordingly be the members of the respective Houses of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Great Britain, and they, together with the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons so summoned and returned as above on the part of Ireland, shall be the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom; and such first Parliament may (in that case), if not sooner dissolved, continue to sit so long as the present Parliament of Great Britain may now by law continue to sit, and that every one of the Lords of Parliament of the United Kingdom, and every member of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, in the first and all succeeding Parliaments, shall, until the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall otherwise provide, take the oaths, and make and subscribe the declaration, which are at present by law enjoined to be taken, made, and subscribed by the Lords and Commons of the Parliament of Great Britain.

*Resolved*, 18. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose that the churches of that part of Great Britain called England, and of Ireland, should be united into one Church, and the archbishops, bishops, deans and clergy of the churches of England and Ireland shall, from time to time, be summoned to and entitled to sit in convocation of the United Church in the like manner, and subject to the same regulations as are at present by law established, with respect to the like orders of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the United Church shall be preserved as now by law established for the Church of England; and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland shall likewise be preserved as now by law established for the Church of Scotland. And that



the continuance and preservation for ever of the said United Church, as the Established Church of that part of the United Kingdom called England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental condition of the treaty of Union.

*Resolved*, 19. That for the same purpose all laws in force at the time of the Union, and all courts of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, shall remain as now by law established, subject only to such alterations and regulations, from time to time, as circumstances may appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to require, provided that all writs of error and appeals depending at the time of the Union, or hereafter to be brought, and which might now be finally decided by the House of Lords of either kingdom, shall from and after the Union be finally decided by the House of Lords of the United Kingdom; and provided that, from and after the Union there shall remain in Ireland an instance Court of Admiralty, for the determination of causes, civil and maritime only; and that all laws at present in force in either kingdom, which shall be contrary to any of the provisions which may be enacted by any Act for carrying this article into effect, be from and after the Union repealed.

*Resolved*, 20. That for the same purpose it would be fit to propose that His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain and Ireland shall, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing as to encouragement and bounties on the like articles, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom respectively, and generally in respect of trade and navigation in all ports and places in the United Kingdom and its dependencies; and that in all treaties made by His Majesty, his heirs and successors, with any foreign power, His Majesty's subjects of Ireland shall have the same privileges, and be on the same footing as His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain.

*Resolved*, 21. That from the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all prohibitions and bounties on the export of articles, the growth or manufacture of either country, to the other shall cease and determine; and that the said articles shall thenceforth be exported from one country to the other without duty or bounty on such export.

*Resolved*, 22. That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either Kingdom, not hereinafter enumerated as subject to specific duties, shall from henceforth be imported into each country from the other free from duty, other than such countervailing duty as shall be annexed to the several articles contained in the Schedule No. I.\* and that the articles hereinafter enumerated shall be subject for the period of twenty years from the Union, on importation into each country from the other, to the duties specified in the Schedule No. II.,\* annexed to this article, viz. :—

Apparel.	Millinery.
Brass, wrought.	Paper, stained.
Cabinet ware.	Pottery.
Coaches and carriages.	Saddlery.
Copper, wrought.	Silk, manufactured.
Cottons.	Stockings.
Glass.	Thread, bullion for lace,
Haberdashery.	pearl, and spangles.
Hats.	Tin plates, wrought iron,
Lace, gold and silver;	and hardware.
gold and silver threads.	

And that the woollen manufacture shall pay on importation into each country the duties now payable on importation into Ireland; salt and hops on importation into Ireland, duties not exceeding

\* This refers to Schedules annexed to the resolutions, as originally introduced.

those which are now paid in Ireland; and coals on importation to be subject to burdens not exceeding those to which they are now subject.

That calicoes and muslins be subject and liable to the duties now payable on the same, until the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight; and from and after the said day, the said duties shall be annually reduced in such proportion, and at such periods as shall hereafter be enacted, so as that the said duties shall stand at ten per cent. from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen, until the fifth day of January, which shall be in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that cotton, yarn, and cotton twist, shall also be subject and liable to the duties now payable upon the same, until the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the said day the said duties shall be annually reduced at such times, and in such proportions, as shall be hereafter enacted, so as that all duties shall cease on the said articles from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen.

*Resolved*, 23. That any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, which are or may be subject to internal duty, or to duty on the materials of which they are composed, may be made subject on their importation into each country respectively from the other, to such countervailing duty as shall appear to be just and reasonable in respect to such internal duty or duties on the materials; and that for the said purposes the articles specified in the said Schedule No. I. should, upon importation into Ireland, be subject to the duty which shall be set forth therein, liable to be taken off, diminished, or increased in the manner herein specified; and that upon the like export of the like articles from each country to the other respectively, a drawback shall be given, equal in amount to the countervailing duty, payable on the articles hereinbefore specified, on the import into the same country with the other; and that in like manner, in future, it shall be competent to the United Parliament to impose any new or additional countervailing duties, or to take off or diminish such existing countervailing duties as may appear on like principles to be just and reasonable, in respect of any future or additional internal duty on any article of the growth or manufacture of either country, or of any new additional duty on any materials of which such article may be composed, or any abatement of the same; and that when any such new or additional countervailing duty shall be so imposed on the import of any article into either country from the other, a drawback equal in amount to such countervailing duty, shall be given in like manner on the export of every such article respectively from the same country.

*Resolved*, 24. That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom, when exported through the other, shall in all cases be exported subject to the same charges as if they had been exported directly from the country of which they were the growth, produce, or manufacture.

*Resolved*, 25. That all duty charged on the import of foreign or colonial goods into either country, shall, on their export to the other, be either drawn back, or the amount, if any be retained, shall be placed to the credit of the country to which they shall be so exported, so long as the general expenses of the empire shall be defrayed by proportional contributions. *Provided*, Nothing herein shall extend to take away any duty, bounty, or prohibition which exists with respect to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuit, but that the same may be regulated, varied, or repeated, from time to time, as the United Parliament shall deem expedient.



## APPENDIX No. II.

### AN ACT FOR THE UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

2d JULY, 1800.

WHEREAS, In pursuance of His Majesty's most gracious recommendation to the two Houses of Parliament in Great Britain and Ireland respectively, to consider of such measures as might best tend to strengthen and consolidate the connection between the two kingdoms, the two Houses of the Parliament of Great Britain and the two Houses of the Parliament of Ireland have severally agreed and resolved that, in order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire, it will be advisable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as may be established by the Acts of the respective Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

And whereas, in furtherance of the said resolution, both Houses of the said two Parliaments respectively have likewise agreed upon certain articles, for effectuating and establishing the said purposes, in the tenor following:—

ARTICLE I. That it be the first article of the Union of the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, that the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon the first day of January, which shall be in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and one, and for ever after, be united into one kingdom, by the name of The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and that the royal style and titles appertaining to the imperial crown of the said United Kingdom and its dependencies; and also the ensigns, armourial flags, and banners thereof shall be such as His Majesty, by his royal proclamation under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, shall be pleased to appoint.

ARTICLE II. That it be the second article of Union, that the succession to the imperial crown of the said United Kingdom, and of the dominions thereunto belonging, shall continue limited and settled in the same manner as the succession to the imperial crown of the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of Union between England and Scotland.

ARTICLE III. That it be the third article of Union, that the said United Kingdom be represented in one and the same Parliament, to be styled "The Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."

ARTICLE IV. That it be the fourth article of Union, that four lords spiritual of Ireland by rotation of sessions, and twenty-eight lords temporal of Ireland elected for life by the peers of Ireland, shall be the number to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Lords of the Parliament of the United Kingdom; and one hundred commoners (two for each county of Ireland, two for the city of Dublin, two for the city of Cork, one for the University of Trinity College, and one for each of the thirty-one most considerable cities, towns, and boroughs) be the number to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

That such Act as shall be passed in the Parliament of Ireland previous to the Union, to regulate

the mode by which the lords spiritual and temporal and the commons, to serve in the Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Ireland, shall be summoned and returned to the said Parliament shall be considered as forming part of the treaty of Union, and shall be incorporated in the Acts of the respective Parliaments by which the said Union shall be ratified and established.

That all questions touching the rotation or election of lords spiritual or temporal of Ireland to sit in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, shall be decided by the House of Lords thereof; and whenever, by reason of an equality of votes in the election of any such lords temporal, a complete election shall not be made according to the true intent of this article, the names of those peers for whom such equality of votes shall be so given, shall be written on pieces of paper of a similar form, and shall be put into a glass, by the clerk of the Parliaments at the table of the House of Lords whilst the House is sitting; and the peer or peers whose name or names shall be first drawn out by the clerk of the Parliaments shall be deemed the peer or peers elected, as the case may be.

That any person holding any peerage of Ireland now subsisting, or hereafter to be created, shall not thereby be disqualified from being elected to serve, if he shall so think fit, or from serving or continuing to serve, if he shall so think fit, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, unless he shall have been previously elected as above, to sit in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom; but that so long as such peer of Ireland shall so continue to be a member of the House of Commons, he shall not be entitled to the privilege of peerage, nor be capable of being elected to serve as a peer on the part of Ireland, or of voting at any such election; and that he shall be liable to be sued, indicted, proceeded against, and tried as a commoner, for any offence with which he may be charged.

That it shall be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to create peers of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland, and to make promotions in the peerage thereof, after the Union; *Provided*, That no new creation of any such peers shall take place after the Union until three of the peerages of Ireland, which shall have been existing at the time of the Union, shall have become extinct; and upon such extinction of three peerages, that it shall be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to create one peer of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland; and in like manner so often as three peerages of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland; and in like manner so often as three peerages of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland shall become extinct, it shall be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to create one other peer of the said part of the United Kingdom; and if it shall happen that the peers of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland shall, by extinction of peerages or otherwise, be reduced to the number of one hundred, exclusive of all such peers of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland as shall hold any peerage of Great Britain subsisting at the time of the Union, or of the United King-



dom created since the Union, by which such peers shall be entitled to an hereditary seat in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, then and in that case it shall and may be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to create one peer of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland as often as any one of such one hundred peerages shall fail by extinction, or as often as any one peer of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland shall become entitled, by descent or creation, to an hereditary seat in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom; it being the true intent and meaning of this article, that at all times after the Union it shall and may be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to keep up the peerage of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland to the number of one hundred, over and above the number of such of the said peers as shall be entitled by descent or creation to an hereditary seat in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom.

That if any peerage shall at any time be in abeyance, such peerage shall be deemed and taken as an existing peerage; and no peerage shall be deemed extinct, unless on default of claimants to the inheritance of such peerage for the space of one year from the death of the person who shall have been last possessed thereof; and if no claim shall be made to the inheritance of such peerage, in such form and manner as may from time to time be prescribed by the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, before the expiration of the said period of a year, then and in that case such peerage shall be deemed extinct; *Provided*, That nothing herein shall exclude any person from afterwards putting in a claim to the peerage so deemed extinct; and if such claim shall be allowed as valid, by judgment of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom reported to His Majesty, such peerage shall be considered as revived; and in case any new creation of a peerage of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland shall have taken place in the interval, in consequence of the supposed extinction of such peerage, then no new right of creation shall accrue to His Majesty, his heirs or successors, in consequence of the next extinction which shall take place of any peerage of that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland.

That all questions touching the election of members to sit on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom shall be heard and decided in the same manner as questions touching such elections in Great Britain now are or at any time hereafter shall by law be heard and decided; subject nevertheless to such particular regulations in respect to Ireland as, from local circumstances, the Parliament of the United Kingdom may from time to time deem expedient.

That the qualifications in respect of property of the members elected on the part of Ireland to sit in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, shall be respectively the same as are now provided by law in the cases of elections for counties and cities, and boroughs respectively in that part of Great Britain called England, unless any other provision shall hereafter be made in that respect by Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom.

That when His Majesty, his heirs or successors, shall declare his, her, or their pleasure for holding a first or any subsequent Parliament of the United Kingdom, a proclamation shall issue, under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, to cause the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, who are to serve in the Parliament thereof on the part of Ireland, to be returned in such manner as by any Act of this present session of the Parliament of Ireland shall be provided; and that the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of Great Britain shall, together with the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons so returned as aforesaid on the part of Ireland, constitute the two Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

That if His Majesty, on or before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, on which day the Union is to take place, shall declare, under the Great Seal of Great Britain, that it is expedient that the Lords and Commons of the present Parliament of Great Britain should be the

members of the respective Houses of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Great Britain; then the said Lords and Commons of the present Parliament of Great Britain shall accordingly be the members of the respective Houses of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Great Britain; and they, together with the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons, so summoned and returned as above on the part of Ireland, shall be the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of the first Parliament of the United Kingdom; and such first Parliament may (in that case), if not sooner dissolved, continue to sit so long as the present Parliament of Great Britain may by law now continue to sit, if not sooner dissolved: *Provided always*, That until an Act shall have passed in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, providing in what cases persons holding offices or places of profit under the Crown of Ireland, shall be incapable of being members of the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, no greater number of members than twenty, holding such offices or places as aforesaid, shall be capable of sitting in the said House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom; and if such a number of members shall be returned to serve in the said House, as to make the whole number of members of the said house holding such offices or places as aforesaid more than twenty, then and in such case the seats or places of such members as shall have last accepted such offices or places shall be vacated, at the option of such members, so as to reduce the number of members holding such offices or places to the number of twenty; and no person holding any such office or place shall be capable of being elected or of sitting in the said House, while there are twenty persons holding such offices or places sitting in the said House; and that every one of the Lords of Parliament of the United Kingdom, and every member of the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, in the first and all succeeding Parliaments, shall, until the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall otherwise provide, take the oaths, and make and subscribe the declaration, and take and subscribe the oath now by law enjoined to be taken, made, and subscribed by the Lords and Commons of the Parliament of Great Britain.

That the Lords of Parliament on the part of Ireland, in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, shall at all times have the same privileges of Parliament which shall belong to the Lords of Parliament on the part of Great Britain; and the Lords spiritual and temporal respectively on the part of Ireland shall at all times have the same rights in respect of their sitting and voting upon the trial of peers, as the Lords spiritual and temporal respectively on the part of Great Britain; and that all Lords spiritual of Ireland shall have rank and precedence next and immediately after the Lords spiritual of the same rank and degree of Great Britain, and shall enjoy all privileges as fully as the Lords spiritual of Great Britain do now or may hereafter enjoy the same (the right and privilege of sitting in the House of Lords, and the privileges depending thereon, and particularly the right of sitting on the trial of peers, excepted); and that the persons holding any temporal peerages of Ireland, existing at the time of the Union, shall, from and after the Union, have rank and precedence next and immediately after all the persons holding peerages of the like orders and degrees in Great Britain, subsisting at the time of the Union; and that all peerages of Ireland created after the Union shall have rank and precedence with the peerages of the United Kingdom so created, according to the dates of their creations; and that all peerages both of Great Britain and Ireland, now subsisting or hereafter to be created, shall in all other respects, from the date of the Union, be considered as peerages of the United Kingdom; and that the peers of Ireland shall, as peers of the United Kingdom, be sued and tried as peers, except as aforesaid, and shall enjoy all privileges of peers as fully as the peers of Great Britain; the right and privilege of sitting in the House of Lords, and the



privileges depending thereon, and the right of sitting on the trial of peers, only excepted.

ARTICLE V. That it be the fifth article of Union, that the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called *The United Church of England and Ireland*; and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said United Church shall be and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and that the continuance and preservation of the said United Church as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union; and that in like manner the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland shall remain and be preserved, as the same are now established by law, and by the Acts for the Union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland.

ARTICLE VI. That it be the sixth article of Union, that His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain and Ireland shall, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing, as to encouragements and bounties, on the like articles, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country respectively, and generally in respect of trade and navigation in all ports and places in the United Kingdom and its dependencies; and that in all treaties made by His Majesty, his heirs and successors, with any foreign power, His Majesty's subjects of Ireland shall have the same privileges, and be on the same footing, as His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain.

That, from the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all prohibitions and bounties on the export of articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, to the other, shall cease and determine; and that the said articles shall henceforth be exported from one country to the other without duty or bounty on such export.

That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country (not hereinafter enumerated as subject to specific duties), shall from thenceforth be imported into each country from the other free from duty, other than such countervailing duties on the several articles enumerated in the Schedule Number One, A. and B., hereunto annexed, as are therein specified, or to such other countervailing duties as shall hereafter be imposed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, in the manner hereinafter provided; and that, for the period of twenty years from the Union, the articles enumerated in the Schedule Number Two, hereto annexed, shall be subject, on importation into each country from the other, to the duties specified in the said Schedule Number Two; and the woollen manufactures, known by the names of *Old and New Drapery*, shall pay, on importation into each country from the other, the duties now payable on importation into Ireland; salt and hops, on importation into Ireland from Great Britain, duties not exceeding those which are now paid on importation into Ireland; and coals, on importation into Ireland from Great Britain, shall be subject to burdens not exceeding those to which they are now subject.

That calicos and muslins shall, on their importation into either country from the other, be subject and liable to the duties now payable on the same, on the importation thereof from Great Britain into Ireland, until the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight; and from and after the said day the said duties shall be annually reduced, by equal proportions, as near as may be in each year, so as that the said duties shall stand at ten per centum from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen, until the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that cotton yarn and cotton twist shall, on their importation into either country from the other, be subject and liable to the duties now payable upon the same on the importation thereof from Great Britain into Ireland, until the fifth day of January, one

thousand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the said day the said duties shall be annually reduced by equal proportions as near as may be in each year, so as that all duties shall cease on the said articles from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen.

That any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, which are or may be subject to internal duty, or to duty on the materials of which they are composed, may be made subject, on their importation into each country respectively from the other, to such countervailing duty as shall appear to be just and reasonable in respect of such internal duty or duties on the materials; and that for the said purposes the articles specified in the said Schedule Number One A. and B. shall be subject to the duties set forth therein liable to be taken off, diminished, or increased in the manner herein specified; and that upon the export of the said articles from each country to the other respectively, a drawback shall be given equal in amount to the countervailing duty payable on such articles on the import thereof into the same country from the other; and that in like manner in future it shall be competent to the United Parliament to impose any new or additional countervailing duties, or to take off or diminish such existing countervailing duties as may appear, on like principles, to be just and reasonable in respect of any future or additional internal duty on any article of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, or of any new or additional duty on any materials of which such article may be composed, or of any abatement of duty on the same; and that when any such new or additional countervailing duty shall be so imposed on the import of any article into either country from the other, a drawback, equal in amount to such countervailing duty, shall be given in like manner on the export of every such article respectively from the same country to the other.

That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, when exported through the other, shall in all cases be exported subject to the same charges as if they had been exported directly from the country of which they were the growth, produce, or manufacture.

That all duty charged on the import of foreign or colonial goods into either country shall, on their export to the other, be either drawn back, or the amount, if any be retained, shall be placed to the credit of the country to which they shall be so exported, so long as the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed by proportional contributions: *Provided always*, That nothing herein shall extend to take away any duty, bounty, or prohibition, which exists with respect to corn, meal, malt, flour, or biscuit; but that all duties, bounties, or prohibitions, on the said articles, may be regulated, varied, or repealed, from time to time, as the United Parliament shall deem expedient.

ARTICLE VII. That it be the seventh article of Union that the charge arising from the payment of the interest, and the sinking fund for the reduction of the principal, of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively, except as hereinafter provided.

That for the space of twenty years after the Union shall take place, the contribution of Great Britain and Ireland respectively, towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom in each year, shall be defrayed in the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain and two parts for Ireland; and that at the expiration of the said twenty years, the future expenditure of the United Kingdom (other than the interest and charges of the debt to which either country shall be separately liable) shall be defrayed in such proportion as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall deem just and reasonable, upon a comparison of the real value of the exports and imports of the respective countries, upon an average of the three years next preceding the period of revision; or on a com-



parison of the value of the quantities of the following articles consumed within the respective countries, on a similar average; viz., beer, spirits, sugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt; or according to the aggregate proportion resulting from both these considerations combined; or on a comparison of the amount of income in each country, estimated from the produce for the same period of a general tax, if such shall have been imposed on the same descriptions of income in both countries; and that the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall afterwards proceed in like manner to revise and fix the said proportions according to the same rules, or any of them, at periods not more distant than twenty years, nor less than seven years from each other; unless, previous to any such period, the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall have declared, as hereinafter provided, that the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the like articles in both countries: that, for the defraying the said expenditure according to the rules above laid down, the revenues of Ireland shall hereafter constitute a consolidated fund, which shall be charged in the first instance with the interest of the debt of Ireland, and with the sinking fund applicable to the reduction of the said debt, and the remainder shall be applied towards defraying the proportion of the expenditure of the United Kingdom to which Ireland may be liable in each year; that the proportion of contribution to which Great Britain and Ireland will be liable shall be raised by such taxes in each country respectively as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall from time to time deem fit: *Provided always*, That in regulating the taxes in each country, by which their respective proportions shall be levied, no article in Ireland shall be made liable to any new or additional duty, by which the whole amount of duty payable thereon would exceed the amount which will be thereafter payable in England on the like article; that if, at the end of any year, any surplus shall accrue from the revenues of Ireland, after defraying the interest, sinking fund, and proportional contribution and separate charges to which the said country shall then be liable, taxes shall be taken off to the amount of such surplus, or the surplus shall be applied by the Parliament of the United Kingdom to local purposes in Ireland, or to make good any deficiency which may arise in the revenues of Ireland in time of peace, or be invested, by the commissioners of the national debt of Ireland, in the funds, to accumulate for the benefit of Ireland at compound interest, in case of the contribution of Ireland in time of war: *Provided*, That the surplus so to accumulate shall at no future period be suffered to exceed the sum of five Millions: that all moneys to be raised after the Union, by loan, in peace or war, for the service of the United Kingdom by the Parliament thereof, shall be considered to be a joint debt, and the charges thereof shall be borne by the respective countries in the proportion of their respective contributions: *Provided*, That if at any time, in raising their respective contributions hereby fixed for each country, the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall judge it fit to raise a greater proportion of such respective contributions in one country within the year than in the other, or to set apart a greater proportion of sinking fund for the liquidation of the whole or any part of the loan raised on account of the one country than that raised on account of the other country, then such part of the said loan, for the liquidation of which different provisions shall have been made for the respective countries, shall be kept distinct, and shall be borne by each separately, and only that part of the said loan be deemed joint and common, for the reduction of which the respective countries shall have made provision in the proportion of their respective contributions: that if at any future day the separate debt of each country respectively shall have been liquidated, or if the values of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, and of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction

thereof, and to the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund) shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country respectively; or if the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion, shall not exceed one-hundredth part of the said value; and if it shall appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future expenditure of the United Kingdom it shall be competent to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth from time to time, as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time demand; that, from the period of such declaration, it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom according to any specific proportion, or according to any of the rules herein before described: *Provided nevertheless*, That the interest or charges which may remain on account of any part of the separate debt with which either country shall be chargeable, and which shall not be liquidated or consolidated proportionably as above, shall, until extinguished, continue to be defrayed by separate taxes in each country; that a sum, not less than the sum which has been granted by the Parliament of Ireland on the average of six years immediately preceding the first day of January, in the year one thousand eight hundred, in premiums for the internal encouragement of agriculture or manufactures, or for the maintaining institutions for pious and charitable purposes, shall be applied, for the period of twenty years after the Union, to such local purposes in Ireland, in such manner as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall direct; that, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all public revenue arising to the United Kingdom from the territorial dependencies thereof, and applied to the general expenditure of the United Kingdom, shall be so applied in the proportions of the respective contributions of the two countries.

ARTICLE VIII. That it be the eighth article of the Union, that all laws in force at the time of the Union, and all the courts of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, shall remain as now by law established within the same, subject only to such alterations and regulations from time to time as circumstances may appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to require. *Provided*, That all writs of error and appeals depending at the time of the Union or hereafter to be brought, and which might now be finally decided by the House of Lords of either kingdom, shall, from and after the Union, be finally decided by the House of Lords of the United Kingdom: *And provided*, That from and after the Union there shall remain in Ireland an instance Court of Admiralty, for the determination of causes, civil and maritime only, and that the appeal from sentences of the said court shall be to His Majesty's delegates in his Court of Chancery in that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland; and that all laws at present in force in either kingdom, which shall be contrary to any of the provisions which may be enacted by any Act for carrying these articles into effect, be from and after the Union repealed.

And whereas, the said articles having, by address of the respective Houses of Parliament in Great Britain and Ireland, been humbly laid before His Majesty, His Majesty has been graciously pleased to approve the same; and to recommend it to his two Houses of Parliament in Great Britain



and Ireland, to consider of such measures as may be necessary for giving effect to the said articles; in order, therefore, to give full effect and validity to the same, be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the said foregoing recited articles, each and every one of them, according to the true import and tenor thereof, be ratified, confirmed, and approved, and be and they are hereby declared to be the articles of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland; and the same shall be in force and have effect forever, from the first day of January, which shall be in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and one. *Provided*, That before that period an Act shall have been passed by the Parliament of Ireland, for carrying into effect, in the like manner, the said foregoing recited articles.

[Here follows the supplementary enactment for regulating the mode of summoning the Irish Lords and Commons to sit in the then current United Parliament. This enactment is sufficiently described in the text.]



## APPENDIX No. III.

### PROCLAMATIONS FOUND IN EMMET'S ARMS-DEPOTS, INTENDED TO BE ISSUED ON THE DAY OF THE OUTBREAK.

#### THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND :

"You are now called upon to show to the world that you are competent to take your place among nations, that you have a right to claim their recognition of you as an independent country, by the only satisfactory proof you can furnish of your capability of maintaining your independence, your wresting it from England with your own hands.

"In the development of this system, which has been organized within the last eight months, at the close of internal defeat, and without the hope of external assistance—which has been conducted with a tranquillity mistaken for obedience, which neither the failure of a similar attempt in England has retarded, nor the renewal of hostilities has accelerated—in the development of this system you will show to the people of England that there is a spirit of perseverance in this country beyond their power to calculate or repress. You will show them that as long as they think to hold unjust dominion over Ireland, under no change of circumstances can they count upon its obedience; under no aspect of affairs can they judge of its intentions; you will show to them that the question which it now behooves them to take into serious and instant consideration is not, whether they will resist a separation, which it is our fixed determination to effect, but whether or not they will *drive us beyond separation*—whether they will, by a sanguinary resistance, create a deadly national antipathy between the two countries, or whether they will take the only means still left of driving such a sentiment from our minds—a prompt, manly, and sagacious acquiescence in our just and unalterable determination.

"If the secrecy with which the present effort has been conducted shall have led our enemies to suppose that its extent must have been partial, a few days will undeceive them. That confidence which was once lost by trusting to external support, and suffering our own means to be gradually undermined, has been again restored. We have been mutually pledged to each other, to look only at our own strength, and that the first introduction of a system of terror, the first attempt to execute an individual in one county should be a signal for insurrection in all. We have now, without the loss of a man, with our means of communication untouched, brought our plans to the moment when they are ripe for execution, and in the promptitude with which nineteen counties will come forward at once to execute them, it will be found that neither confidence nor communication are wanting to the people of Ireland.

"In calling on our countrymen to come forward, we feel ourselves bound at the same time to justify our claim to their confidence by a precise declaration of our views. We therefore solemnly declare that our object is to establish a free and independent Republic in Ireland; that the pursuit of this object we will relinquish only with our lives; that we will never, but at the express call of our country, abandon our post till the acknowledgment of its independence is obtained from England; and that

we will enter into no negotiation (but for exchange of prisoners) with the Government of that country while a British army remains in Ireland. Such is the declaration which we call on the people of Ireland to support. And we call first on that part of Ireland which was once paralyzed by the want of intelligence to show that to that cause only was its inaction to be attributed; on that part of Ireland which was once foremost by its fortitude in suffering; on that part of Ireland which once offered to take the salvation of the country on itself; on that part of Ireland where the flame of liberty first glowed; we call upon the North to stand up and shake off their slumber and oppressions.

#### "CITIZENS OF DUBLIN:

"A band of patriots, mindful of their oath, and faithful to their engagement as united Irishmen, have determined to give freedom to their country, and a period to the long career of English oppression.

"In this endeavour they are now successfully engaged, and their efforts are seconded by complete and universal co-operation from the country, every part of which, from the extremity of the North to that of the South, pours forth its warriors in support of our hallowed cause. Citizens of Dublin, we require your aid. Necessary secrecy has prevented, to many of you, notice of our plan, but the erection of our national standard, the sacred, though long degraded, green, will be sufficient to call to arms and rally round it every man in whose breast exists a spark of patriotism or sense of duty. Avail yourselves of your local advantages—in a city each street becomes a defile, and each house a battery. Impede the march of your oppressors; charge them with the arms of the brave—the pike; and from your windows and roofs hurl stones, bricks, bottles, and all other convenient implements, on the head of the satellites of your tyrant, the mercenary, the sanguinary soldiery of England.

"Orangemen! add not to the catalogue of your follies and crimes. Already have you been duped to the ruin of your country, in the legislative union with its tyrant; attempt not an opposition which will carry with it your inevitable destruction. Return from your paths of delusion—return to the arms of your countrymen, who will receive and hail your repentance.

"Countrymen of all descriptions, let us act with union and concert. All sects, Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, are equally and indiscriminately embraced in the benevolence of your object. Repress, prevent, and discourage excesses, pillage, and intoxication. Let each man do his duty, and remember that during public agitation inaction becomes a crime. Be no other competition known than that of doing good. Remember against whom you fight—your oppressors for six hundred years; remember their massacres, their tortures; remember your murdered friends, your burned houses, your violated females; keep in mind your country, to whom we are now giving her high rank among nations, and in the honest terror of feeling let us exclaim, that as in the hour of trial we serve this country, so may God serve us in that, which will be last of all."



















